تفسیر انوار البیان

1

ILLUMINATING DISCOURSES
on the
NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

By
Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

DARUL-ISHAAT
Karachi-Pakistan.

Revised Edition
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Volume One
Part I & II
Para One to Para Five

Translation Edited By
Mufti Afzal Hussain Elias

Revised By
Maulana Muhammad Arshad Fakhri
based on *Ma'ariful Quran*

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Publisher's Note

The noble Qur'an is the greatest blessing of Allah on earth. Hence, it is our duty to constantly endeavour to recite it, to peruse it, to understand it and to act on it. The consequence of weakening our link with it and of neglecting it is clear as daylight before us in the disgrace that is the lot of the Muslims. We have no way of success and prosperity in this world and the next other than strengthening our link with the noble Qur'an.

Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Ashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri رحمة الله عليه had compiled an exegesis of the Qur'an entitled "Anwar-ul-Bayan" in the concluding years of his life. Allah enabled him to achieve it with distinction. His life throughout was a model of simplicity and sincerity. He was busy with the pen always working on something productive to the Muslim ummah. This fact is borne out by a plethora of his works on a number of subjects on Islam. It is his sincerity of devotion that gained universal approval of all his works and he gave a general permission to everyone to publish any of his works.

When I went for Umrah nine years ago, I had the opportunity to renew my old acquaintance with him when the exegesis in Urdu was in finishing stages. He asked me to publish its English translation. Coming as this instruction was during my visit to the Harmayn, I had no hesitation to assent to the Mawlana's instructions. Here in Madinah Munawwarah, the Mawlana himself pays attention to me! He offered to speak to the translator in South Africa to get me the rights of publication. Within a few days he informed me that he had spoken to the translator and advised me to contact him myself, giving me his name and address - Mufti Husayn Ilyas with whom I have an old friendship and who had already kindly given me in writing an authority to publish his all works and translations, accordingly. I had published many of his books in Pakistan before everyone else.

In fact, in a telephonic conversation, he was generous to offer me the composition of the exegesis on the C.D and made some attempts to send them later, we met during Hajj, three years ago, in Makkah. This was a chance meeting in which I reminded him of the C.D's but preoccupations put the matter in abeyance again, Nevertheless. Allah's favour enabled us to commence the work. During the stages of publication, we realise that there are in the exegesis, words of Islamic terminology that are left unexplained. Though those who are conversant with the Arabic and Urdu languages will understood these words yet our readers who know only English would find it different to decipher them. So, a revision of the entire work was undertaken and while the terminology was retained an explanatory meaning was appended based on the English translation of "Ma'ariful Qur'an" compiled by Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه. Apart from this, the translation has not been tampered with.

Al-Hamdulillah - praise belongs to Allah! We at **Darul-Ishaat** are delighted to publish it. This is a great good fortune for us. May Allah approve our effort. Aameen! We have tried our best to make this edition worthy of benefit to our readers. We have included a glossary and an indexs as an added advantage to our readers.

The Arabic text chosen for this valuable exegesis is the one universally acclaimed by the readers of English language. The composition of the exegesis itself is of an outstanding standard and is very beautiful. Great pains have been taken to correct proofreading and to select appropriate paper. Attention ensure has been paid to printing and beautiful binding. Relative to comparable publications in the market, our price is very reasonable.

It is my humble request to readers to remember me in their prayers and my parents, family members. May Allah enable us to be sincere in our efforts and forgive us our lapses in this work and cause us to rectify them. Aameen!

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سورة الفاتحه

Makkan	Surah Al-Fātihah	Verses 1-7

(1) In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful. (2) All praise is only for Allāh, the Lord of the universe, (3) The Beneficent, the Most Merciful, (4) Master of the Day of Retribution. (5) Only You do we worship, and only You do we ask for help. (6) Guide us upon the straight path, (7) The path of those whom You have favoured, not the path of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor those who have gone astray.

THE NAMES AND VIRTUES OF SURAH AI-FĀTIHAH.

Some commentators are of the opinion that Surah Al-Fātihah was revealed in Makkah. Others say that it was revealed in Madinah, while a third group maintain that it was revealed twice – once in Makkah, and again in Madinah.

Of the many names attributed to this Surah, the most famous is that of Al-Fātihah. The tafsīr, "Al Itqān" reports as many as 25 names for this Surah. Some of these names are as follows:

- *Fātihahtul Kitāb (The Opening of the Book).*
- *Fātihahtul Qur'ān (The Introduction of the Qur'ān).*
- *Ummul Kitāb (The Mother of the Book).*
- *Ummul Qur'ān (The Mother of the Qur'ān)*
- *As Sab 'ul Mathāni (The Seven Oft-Repeated Verses).*
- *Surahtul Mathāni (The Chapter of Supplication).*

- *Surahtus Suwāl (The Chapter of Entreaty).*
- *Surahtul Hamd (The Chapter of Praise).*
- *Surahtush Shukr (The Chapter of Gratitude).*

Allāh mentions Surah Al-Fātihah in verse 87 of Surah Hijr, "Verily We have granted you seven verses that are often repeated, and the glorious Qur'ān."

Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه writes (*v.2, p.642*) that Surah Al-Fātihah is called Ummul Kitāb because it is written at the beginning of all manuscripts of the Qur'ān and because salāh begins with its recitation. A great virtue of this Surah is that it is recited in all rakāh of Salāh.

Bukhari (*v.2, p.642*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Surah Al-Fātihah is the greatest Surah in the Qur'ān.

Tirmidhi reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "By Allāh! Such a Surah *(Al-Fātihah)* has not been revealed in the Torah, nor in the Injīl, nor in the Zabūr, nor in the Qur'ān.'

The Mustadrak of Hākim reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called Surah Al-Fātihah the best of the Qur'ān. [*Durrul Manthur, v.1, p.5*]

Certain Ahādith have mentioned that Surah Al-Fātihah is equivalent to two thirds of the Qur'ān. [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abu Umāmah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that only four things were revealed from the treasures that lie beneath Allāh's Throne. These are (1) Ummul Kitāb, (2) Ayatul Kursi, (3) the concluding verses of Surah Al-Baqarah, (4) Surah Kauthar. [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه narrates that the accursed Iblīs cried on the following four occasions:

- *When Surah Al-Fātihah was revealed.*
- *When Allāh declared him to be accursed.*
- *When he was banished to the earth.*
- *When the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *was commissioned.*

Muslim (*v.1, p.271*) reports that Jibrīl عليه السلام was once sitting with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when a thunderous sound was heard from the sky. Looking towards the sky, Jibrīl عليه السلام said that a door of the heavens was opened, which was never opened before.

When an angel descended from it, Jibrīl عليه السلام said that this angel has never descended to earth before. The angel came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said, "Listen to the glad tidings that two celestial lights will be revealed to you, which have never been granted to any other Prophet before you: (1) Fātihahtul Kitāb and (2) the concluding verses of Surah Al-Baqarah. Allāh will certainly fulfil the request made when reciting these verses." (These are both Du'ās, and will be accepted because Allāh has Himself advised them.)

The tafsīr "Itqān" mentions that Surah Al-Fātihah is a collection of all the

themes contained in the Qur'ān, thereby serving as an introduction for them all. This is so because all previous religions *(Dīns)* and the Qur'ān contain the four fundamental sciences:

I. **The science of principles.** This comprises of the following three aspects:

- *Understanding the attributes of Allāh, which are mentioned in the first two verses of Surah Al-Fātihah.*
- *Prophethood, which is alluded to in the verse "The path of those whom You have favoured."*
- *Judgment day, which is referred to in the verse "Master of the Day of Retribution."*

II. The science of worship. This is referred to in the verse "Only You do we worship.'

III. The science of patronage i.e. making oneself subservient to the injunctions of the Shari'ah. This is contained in the verses 'only you do we ask for help" and "Guide us upon the straight path.'

IV. The science of narratives which relates to the incidents of previous nations. The purpose is to gain lessons from their experiences, leading people to emulate the good folk and to discard the behaviour of the evil folk This purpose is contained in the verse 'The path of those whom You have favoured, not the path of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor those who have gone astray." [*verse 6*]

Muslim (*v.1, p. 170*) has reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh says, "I have divided the Salāh (i.e. one of the most important aspects of Salāh) in half between My slave and Myself. My slave shall receive whatever he asks for. When he recites, *"All praise is only for Allāh, the Lord of the universe,'* I say, "My slave has praised Me."

"When he recites, "The Beneficent, the Most Merciful," I say, "My slave has lauded Me." When he recites, "Master of the Day of Retribution ," I say, "My slave has glorified Me." When he recites, "Only You do we worship, and only you do we ask for help," Allāh says, "This is between My slave and Me. My slave shall have what he asks for." This means that the person has acknowledged the fact that he should worship only Allāh. He has thus made himself worthy of attaining Allāh's mercy and forgiveness by absolving himself from Polytheism. He has also understood and announces that help must be sought only from Allāh.

Thereafter, when the person in Salāh recites, "Guide us upon the straight path, the path of those whom You have favoured, not the path of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor those who have gone astray, " Allāh says, "This is for My slave. He shall receive whatever he asks for."

RECITATION OF THE TA'AWWUDH AND TASMIYYAH.

Whenever a person commences with the recitation of the Qur'ān, he must recite, *"A'ūdhu Billahi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"* ("I seek refuge with Allāh from

Satan/Devil *(Shaytān)*, the accursed.") This phrase is referred to as the Ta'awwudh). Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"When you recite the Qur'ān, seek refuge with Allāh from Satan / Devil (Shaytān), the accursed."*

After reciting the Ta'awwudh, one should recite the Tasmiyyah i.e. *"Bismillah hir Rahmān nir Rahīm."* Whenever a person wants to occupy a home, he must first rid the home of harmful influences, only then can he decorate the house and make it liveable. In a similar manner, a person has first to remove the evil influences of Satan/Devil *(Shaytān)* from his heart before reciting the Qur'ān. It is for this reason that he recites *"A'ūdhu Billahi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm."* Thereafter, he decorates his heart with Allāh's name when he recites *"Bismillah Hir Rahmān nir Rahīm"*.

"Bismillah hir Rahmān nir Rahīm" should also be recited before reciting all Surahs of the Qur'ān, with the exception of Surah Barā'ah, where the Tasmiyyah will not be recited after completing Surah Anfāl and commencing Surah Barā'ah (Surah Tawbsah) (the details of this will be mentioned in the exegesis of Surah Barā'ah, Insha Allāh).

According to Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, the Tasmiyyah is actually a verse of the Qur'ān, which was revealed to separate the various Surahs. However, it does not form part of these Surahs. It is only a part of Surah Naml, which includes the actual words *"Bismillah Hir Rahmān nir Rahīm"* in the second bowing (ruku).

Since the entire *Ummah* is unanimous about the fact that Surah Al-Fātihah consists of seven verses, certain Scholars (Ulama) [like Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه] say that 'Bismillah hir Rahmān nir Rahīm" forms the first of these seven verses. According to other Ulama (like Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه), the seventh verse of Surah Al-Fātihah is *"Not the path of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor those who have gone astray."* [*Ma'alimut Tanzeel v.1, p.39*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not know when a Surah ends till "Bismillah hir Rahmān nir Rahīm" was revealed. When it was revealed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم knew exactly when a Surah terminated. [*Durrul Manthur, v.1, p7*]

"Ma'alimut Tanzīl" reports that the appearance of the Tasmiyyah before every Surah is to teach man that he should recite it every time he begins a Surah. This forms part of the etiquette of Qur'ānic recitation.

ALL PRAISE IS FOR ALLĀH, THE LORD OF THE UNIVERSE

The first three verses of Surah Al-Fātihah mention some of Allāh's attributes. Since Allāh possesses all these attributes and more, "All praise must exclusively be His. These praises include All praise that has been offered, or will be offered in this world and in the Hereafter. Even the praises lauded to others will ultimately accrue to Allāh, because He created them all and nurtured them.

The Arabic letter *"Lām"* used in the verse denotes that these praises are exclusive to Allāh, and they can only be attributed to Him. Therefore, even if anyone does not praise Allāh, it will not diminish His praiseworthiness in any way.

THE MEANING OF "LORD OF THE UNIVERSE"

The Arabic word *"Rabb"* refers to a master and one who nurtures [*Ma'alimut Tanzeel*]. Both these meanings apply simultaneously because Allāh is both the Master and the Nurturer of the entire universe.

The Arabic word *"Aalamīn"* (translated above as 'universe) refers to all Allāh's creation. It has been derived from the source word *"ilm"* (knowledge). It has been named such because All species of creation are knowledgeable of Allāh's existence, since they are all signs of his existence. After seeing the innumerable creations of Allāh, only a fool will fail to realise that Allāh is the Creator. The declaration that Allāh is the Lord of the universe dispels the belief of many nations who worship other gods.

Sayyidina Muqātil bin Hibān رحمة الله عليه says that the universe comprises 80,000 creatures. Of these, 40,000 are on land, while the other 40,000 are marine.

Sayyidina Wahb Bin Munabbih رحمة الله عليه says that the creation comprises 18,000 species. However, the correct opinion is that which has been expressed by Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه. He says that the true figure of Allāh's creation is known only to Allāh Himself In support of his statement, Sayyidina Ka'b رضى الله عنه quoted the verse where Allāh says, *"None besides Allāh knows His armies."* [*Ma'alimut Tanzīt, v.1, p.40*]

Allāh has not only created the creation, but He has also arranged for their nourishment and means of living. By means of food and drink, Allāh sustains the lives of all creatures, allowing them to grow and develop. Man is left astonished at Allāh's system of sustaining His creation. No creature is deprived of its sustenance from Allāh, even if the sustenance has to be imported from another continent.

The attribute of nurturing included in the word 'Lord" also includes spiritual nurturing. Allāh also sustains the soul, which is the essence of life.

THE BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

Both the words mentioned in this verse are in the superlative sense and share the same meaning. However, certain commentators say that the word *"Rahmān"* has a more intensified meaning of compassion than the word *"Rahīm"*. While the word *"Rahmān"* can only be used to describe Allāh, the word *"Rahīm"* may be used to describe the creation as well. Allāh's mercy and compassion are witnessed daily, because He sustains and provides for the entire creation.

MASTER OF THE DAY OF RETRIBUTION

This refers to the Day of Qiyamah, when people will receive the rewards or punishment for the deeds that they carry out in this world. None shall be able to intercede without His permission on that day. Allāh says in another verse, *"True sovereignty will belong to Rahmān on that day."* Allāh also says, *"No soul will be of any avail to another All matters will be His on that day."*

Allāh will not only be the Judge on the Day of Judgment but He will be the Master of that day. It occurs in this world that a judge passes Judgment, but he is still bound by the laws of the state and cannot pass Judgment contrary to the

statute. Allāh will decide according to His decrees, and none can dictate to Him. None can veto His decision, nor can an appeal be lodged against it.

Even the animals and the mighty emperors of this world will be lined up before Allāh. He will pass Judgment on to all of them, whereafter the decision will be binding.

ONLY ALLĀH CAN BE WORSHIPPED AND ONLY HE CAN COME TO ONE'S AID.

Once a person has accepted and acknowledged Allāh's attributes as mentioned above, he cannot restrain himself from saying to Allāh, *"Only You do we worship, and only You do we ask for help."* Realizing this, he then beseeches Allāh to grant him what he requires most, viz. guidance to the straight path.

Although the person reciting Surah Al-Fātihah may be a single individual, the plural form is used in this supplication (i.e. the word "we" instead of 'I'). This denotes that all of creation is dependent on Allāh, Who is the deity of all of them, even the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* amongst them. The person reciting Surah Al-Fātihah is therefore making the announcement on behalf of all creation.

Since Allāh possesses all the necessary attributes and capabilities, only He can truly assist any person in need. Supplicating to others for help will be contrary to the demand of this verse. This verse negates Polytheism *(shirk)* in worship, as well as Polytheism *(shirk)* in supplication.

THE PRAYER (DU'Ā) TO BE GUIDED ON THE STRAIGHT PATH *(SIRĀTUL MUSTAQIM)*

"Guide us upon the straight path." Guidance implies walking the path of the truth. Guidance is among the things a person requires from Allāh when he seeks help from Him. Guidance is really the greatest bounty because, without it, a person will suffer eternally in Hell even though one may have enjoyed all the pleasures of this world.

A person may ask himself why would someone who performs his *Salāh* and recites the Qur'ān be required to Prayer for guidance? Is he not guided already? The reply to this is that a person is required to pray to Allāh to keep one steadfast upon the straight path until death. Therefore, with regard to such a person, the prayer in Surah Al-Fātihah will be a supplication for steadfastness. Allāh has also advised the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* to pray as follows: *"Our Lord, cause not our hearts to stray after You have guided us and bestow on us Your mercy, for verily You are the Bestower."* [*Surah Al Imrān, verse 8*]

WHO ARE THOSE WHO TREAD THE STRAIGHT PATH?

Many people claim to be following the straight path. However, Allāh describes that straight path as *"The path of those whom You have favoured."* In verse 69 of Surah Nisā, Allāh describes who are those whom He has favoured. Allāh says, *"Whoso obeys Allāh and His messenger then they will be with those upon whom Allāh has favoured, from the Prophets (Anbiyā), Martyrs (shuhada) and righteous (sālihīn). These are indeed the best of companions."* Therefore, the path treaded by these people will be regarded as the straight path *(Sirātul Mustaqim)*.

"....not the path of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor those who have gone astray." This also describes the favoured ones because they are those who refrain from incurring Allāh's wrath and who have not wandered astray.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported certain narrations wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم referred to the Jews as *"those who have incurred Your wrath"* and the Christians as *"those who have gone astray."* This interpretation has also been reported by Sayyidina Abdullāh-bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Masūd رضى الله عنه.

Allāh says in Surah Al-Baqarah that the Jews *"earned wrath upon wrath"* [*verse 90*]

Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"Do not follow the whims of a nation who have strayed from before, have misled others, and have themselves strayed from the straight path."* [*verse 77*]

The Jews flouted Allāh's commands and opposed the truth even though they possessed knowledge of the truth. The Christians, though they were not as learned, regarded themselves as devout worshippers. They devised their own acts of devotion and took to monasticism, secluding themselves in mountains and enduring many hardships in the process. However, failing to practice despite possessing the relevant knowledge is a serious crime. It is for this reason that the Jews have incurred Allāh's wrath.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has written that in contrast to the above two nations, the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* should be people who possess the relevant knowledge and also practice upon it. He writes that although the Jews and the Christians have both incurred Allāh's wrath, and have both wandered astray, the Jews are especially despised. On the other hand, the Christians have been specifically termed as having strayed because of their misguided behaviour.

The mischief and rebelliousness of the Jews is discussed in detail in Surah Al-Baqarah and other Surahs. Each incident demonstrates how they continually and purposely invited Allāh's wrath upon themselves. Therefore, the Muslims have been advised to pray to Allāh in all Salāh to save themselves from following the ways of the Jews and the Christians. Muslims should now ponder if they are actually averse to the ways of the Jews and Christians as they should, and if they are closely emulating the lifestyles of the favoured servants of Allāh.

In their mannerisms, attire, politics, business, lifestyles and, in fact, in all way, Muslims ape the behaviour of the Jews and Christians. Even reputable and righteous people ape their ways despite reciting Surah Al-Fātihah in all *Rakāh* of their Salāh. Sages have mentioned that the qualities of the Jews will enter Muslim scholars who deviate, while the qualities of Christians will enter the lives of the general Muslim public when they deviate. May Allāh save us all. Āmīn.

Apart from the ways of those described as *'favoured"*, the ways of all other people are regarded as deviant. It will therefore be necessary for all Muslims to stay clear of them, irrespective of their political or religious status. Muslims have been encouraged in this verse to stay aloof from the Jews and Christians because of the danger of inclining towards them. It is necessary that the ways of the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* and atheists remain reprehensible to all Muslims.

The description, instead of the names of these two religious factions have been mentioned in the verse for the following two reasons:

1. To depict that deviation from the ways of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام, the righteous and the martyrs will lead one astray and earn Allāh 's wrath.

2. To illustrate that emulating the ways of others like the Jews and the Christians will also lead one to Allāh's wrath.

THE RECITATION OF "AMĪN."

It is sunnah to recite Āmīn' after Surah Al-Fātihah, while performing Salāh and even when not performing Salāh. The meaning of Āmīn is Oh Allāh! Do accept. Therefore, two prayers *(Du'ās)* are being made, the first being The Prayer *(Du'ā)* itself, and the second being the Prayer *(Du'ā)* for the acceptance of one's Prayer (Du'ā) i.e. the recitation of Āmīn.

"Mālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.42*) reports that "Āmīn" should be recited a little while after the concluding words of Surah Al-Fātihah so that it may not be confused as being part of the Surah. The word Āmīn is not written in the Qur'ān because it is not part of the Qur'ān.

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the thing which the Jews envy most is the recitation of Āmīn.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the Jews envy the following three things of the Muslims:

1. *Greeting everyone;*
2. *Forming saffs (rows,) when performing Salāh;*
3. *Saying 'Āmīn*

Note: Some non-Muslims have raised the objection that it is improper for Allāh to praise Himself. Commentators have mentioned that Surah Al-Fātihah is actually meant to be a praise for Allāh on the lips of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Therefore, the Surah is preceded by the silent phrase, 'Say!' wherein Allāh instructs people to hymn His praises. They say that this is the reason why the second half of the Surah is spoken by the first person.

However, while this reply may suffice for Surah Al-Fātihah, it is not sufficient to reply to the many other verses of the Qur'ān where Allāh praises Himself It will also not reply to the same objection when raised with regard to a hadith, wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم states, "Oh Allāh! I cannot praise You sufficiently. You are as You have praised Yourself."

The reply to this question is that the Creator cannot be judged by the standards of the creation. While the creation cannot praise themselves, Allāh has all rights to do so because He is most deserving of all praises.

Man has been forbidden from praising himself because it would lead to pride and haughtiness. This will eventually lead him to forget Allāh's greatness. On the other hand, none can ever come close to competing with Allāh, let alone supersede Him. If He praises Himself, it cannot lead to any evil. While a proud

person merely pretends to be perfect, Allāh is Perfect and the Absolute Greatest. Therefore, the terms used for man cannot apply to Him.

SURAH AL-FĀTIHAH IS A CURE.

One of the names of Surah Al-Fātihah is. "Shāfiyah' i.e. the curer. Just as the words spiritually heal the heart of a Believers (Muminīn) it also heals the physical body. Sayyidina Sā'ib bin Yazīd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once recited Surah Al-Fātihah and blew on him so that he may be saved from diseases.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه says that Surah A1-Fātihah is an effective antidote for poisons.

Sayyidina Abdul Malik bin Umair رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Fātihahtul Kitāb is a cure for All thing." [*Durrul Manthūr*]

The book "Hisnul Hasīn' reports from Abu Dawūd and Nasai, who say that Surah Fātihah should be repeatedly recited upon a mentally deranged person in the mornings and evenings. The person reciting it should then blow on the patient (in a manner that a few droplets of saliva also fall on the patient). This will, Insha Allāh, will be a cure.

Tirmidhi reports that Surah Al-Fātihah should be recited seven times upon one smitten by a scorpion or snake.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that some Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم were once on a journey, when a person from a nearby locality was stung by a scorpion. The locals asked the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم whether any of them knew of any cure. One of the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم recited Surah Al-Fātihah and blew on the person, thereby curing him. He was rewarded with some goats in lieu of this service.

When his companions saw him returning with the goats, they disliked it because they felt that he had acquired wealth by using Allāh's Book. When they reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said, 'Allāh's Book is the most worthy of acquiring wealth from all things whereby you acquire wealth." [*Bukhari, v.2, p.854*]

RECITING SURAH AL-FĀTIHAH FOR SAFETY AT NIGHT

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'When any of you lies down to rest at night, he will be safe from all things besides death if he recites "Fātihahtul Kitāb" and "*Qul Huw Allāhu Ahad (Surah Ikhlās).*" [*Durrul Manthūr*]

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سورة البقرة

Madinan	Surah Al-Baqarah	Verses 286

الٓمٓ ﴿1﴾ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيۡبَۛ فِيهِۛ هُدٗى لِّلۡمُتَّقِينَ ﴿2﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِ
وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقۡنَٰهُمۡ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿3﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ
إِلَيۡكَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبۡلِكَ وَبِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ هُمۡ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿4﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدٗى مِّن
رَّبِّهِمۡۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ ﴿5﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm. (2) This is a Book wherein there is no doubt Therein is guidance for the Allāh fearing. (3) Those who believe in the unseen, establish Salāh and spend from what We have given them. (4) Those who believe in what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed before you. And they are convinced about the Hereafter. (5) These are the ones who are upon a great guidance from their Lord. These are the successful ones.

SURAH AL-BAQARAH.

Surah Al-Baqarah is the second Surah according to the Uthmāni script. It has been named Al-Baqarah (the bullock) because of the mention of a bullock in the Surah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also referred to it by this name.

THE VIRTUES OF SURAH AL-BAQARAH.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, Do not make your homes like graveyards (by not making dhikr and reciting the Qur'ān therein). Without doubt, devil *(Shaytān)* flees from the house wherein Surah Al-Baqarah is recited." *[Tirmidhi p.408]*

Sayyidina Abu Umāmah رضى الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, 'Recite the Qur'ān because it will appear as an intercessor for its people on the Day of Resurrection. Recite the two lights, Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Āl Imrān, because these two will appear like two clouds or like two

flights of birds on the Day of Resurrection. They will then intercede very strongly on behalf of their people. Recite Surah Al-Baqarah because its recitation is a source of blessings. Forsaking it is a great deprivation, and the people of falsehood cannot combat it." [*Muslim ,v. l, p.270*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه says that "the people of falsehood' in the above hadith refers to those who practise black magic. Therefore, the person who recites Surah Al-Baqarah will be safeguarded from the effect of black magic.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that everything has a pinnacle, and the pinnacle of the Qur'ān is Surah Al-Baqarah. Surah Al-Baqarah contains a verse that is the leader of all verses, viz. Ayatul Kursi. Devil *(Shaytān)* will surely flee from the home wherein Ayatul Kursi is recited. [*Tirmidhi p. 408, Durrul Manthūr v.1, p.20*]

Surah Al-Baqarah is referred to as the pinnacle of the Qur'ān either because it is the longest Surah in the Qur'ān, or because it contains a large number of laws. It may also be called such because it contains the command of Jihād *(religious war)*, whereby Islam may be elevated. [*Mirqāt*]

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه used to say that Surah Al-Baqarah, Surah Nisā, Surah Hajj and Surah Nūr must be learnt because they contain the Faraidh. [*Durrul Manthūr*]

THE HURŪF MUQATTA'ĀT.

"Alif Lām Mīm" is referred to as *Hurūf Muqatta'āt*. Letters like these appear at the beginning of 29 Qur'ānic Surahs. The other letters are *"Alif Lam Rā," "Alif Lām Mīm Sād," "Alif Lām Mīm Rā," "HāMīm" "HāMīm Ain Sīn Qāf" "Kāf Hā Yā Ain Sād "Tā Sīn," "Tā Sīn Mīm," "TāHā ," "YāSīn," "Sād" "Qāf" "Nūn.*

"Alif Lām *Mīm"* appears at the beginning of six Surahs, *"Alif Lām R*ā' at the beginning of five Surahs, *"HāMīm" at* the *beginning* of six Surahs, and *"Tā Sīn Mīm"* at the beginning of two Surahs. All the others appear only *once* each.

Since these letters are termed as Mutashābihāt, commentators do not translate them, and merely comment by saying that Allāh knows best what they mean. This is the stance of many scholars, including the four righteous Khulafa رضى الله عنهم, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and others, [*Ibn Kathīr*]

Some scholars have attached meanings to them, while others say that these are the names of these Surahs. Sayyidina Mujahid رحمة الله عليه says that *'Alif Lām Mīm"* is another name of the Qur'ān. Sayyidina Sha'bi رحمة الله عليه says that it is one of Allāh's names, while Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that it is one of Allāh's names by which Allāh swears on oath.

Certain commentators say that the letter *"Alif"* is the first letter in the name 'Allāh,' the letter *"Lām"* is the beginning of *Latīf* (one of Allāh's names), while the *"Mīm"* stands for the beginning of 'Muhammad.' Others maintain that the letter *"Alif* is the first letter of "Āla'ulllah,' (the bounties of Allāh), the letter *"Lām* "is the beginning of 'Lutfullah' (Allāh's grace), while the *"Mīm"* stands for 'Majdullah' (Allāh's grandeur). However, none of these interpretations have been reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Some scholars have mentioned that since the Arabs said that the Qur'ān was the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم speech, the Hurūf Muqatta'āt have been added to the Qur'ān to impress upon them that the Qur'ān comprises of the same letters which they use in their daily speech. However, the fact that they are still unable to produce a single Surah equivalent to the Qur'ān, proves that it cannot be the speech of an eloquent man, let alone an untutored person.

The *Muqatta'āt* letters are recited individually and, according to the laws of *Tajwīd,* one will prolong their pronunciation (called '*Madd*').

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Masūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever will recite a single letter of the Qur'ān will receive the reward of a good deed for every letter recited, and every good deed is multiplied ten times. I do not say that *'Alif Lām Mīm'* is one letter, but Alif is one letter, Lām is one letter, and *Mīm* is another letter." [*Tirmidhi p. 413*]

THE QUR'ĀN IS ALLĀH'S BOOK WITHOUT DOUBT

"This is a Book wherein there is no doubt." If a person was to ponder over the Qur'ān, he will realise that the Qur'ān must surely be Allāh's revelation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. If any person does not arrive at this conclusion, the fault lies with his perception and understanding.

If a person rejects the Qur'ān after much deliberation, saying that he has doubts about the Qur'ān, it will merely be his obstinacy that forbids him from accepting it.

THE QUR'ĀN IS A GUIDANCE FOR THOSE WHO FEAR ALLĀH

"Therein is guidance for the Allāh fearing." Another verse of Surah Al-Baqarah says that the Qur'ān is "guidance for mankind."

Although the Qur'ān essentially guides all of mankind, it is especially beneficial to those who fear Allāh because they will attach importance to it *and* pay heed to its advice. They are the ones who have decided not to be deviated, and not to remain in infidelity *(Kufr).*

The Arabic word Muttaqīn (translated above as *"the Allāh fearing")* actually means people who are abstinent. The word Piety *(taqwa)* is also derived from the same root word. Abstinence from infidelity *(Kufr),* Polytheism *(shirk)* and sins, as well as performing good deeds are included in the meaning of "piety *(taqwa)*'. Abstaining from doubtful *things* and devoting one's inner self to Allāh will constitute Piety ("piety *(taqwa)*") of a higher degree. The piety *(taqwa)* and belief *(Imān)* of the pious persons *(Muttaqīn)* continuously increase with the Qur'ān.

THE QUALITIES OF THE PIOUS PERSONS *(MUTTAQĪN).*

The first quality of the people of piety *(taqwa)* pious people *(Muttaqīn)* is that they are *"Those who believe in the unseen"* i.e. they believe in everything that Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mention about past and future events, even though they have never witnessed them.

Belief *(Imān)* is only acceptable when one believes in the unseen. The belief of people on the Day of Resurrection will not be acceptable because everything

will be before their eyes.

The second quality of the pious peoples *(Muttaqīn)* is that they *"establish Salāh."* The verse does not say that they merely perform Salāh, but that they *"establish Salāh."* This means that in their Salāh they pay heed to every *Fardh, Wājib, Sunnah* and *Mustahab* act. They concentrate deeply in their *salāh,* performing it with humility.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه said, "The establishment of Salāh means that one performs the kneeling or bowing *(ruku)* and prostration *(sajdah)* properly. One must also recite the Qur'ān correctly in Salāh, be humble, and be conscious of the Salāh."

The third quality of the pious peoples *(Muttaqīn)* is that they *"spend from what we have given them."* After mentioning the greatest of all physical forms of worship *(Salāh),* Allāh says that the pious *(Muttaqīn)* are also particular about spending from the wealth that Allāh has granted to them. This verse refers to all forms of spending in charity, whether it be *Fardh (like zakāh and ushr), Wājib (like Sadaqatul Fitr),* or optional.

"Those who believe in what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed before you." Another quality of the pious *(Muttaqīn)* is mentioned. Belief *(Imān)* is only acceptable when one believes in all of Allāh's Prophet *(Anbiyā)* عليه السلام and all the divine scriptures. Rejection of any one of these will disqualify one as a Believer *(Mu'min).* This is mentioned in verse 285 of Surah Al-Baqarah, where the Believers *(Muminīn)* are told to declare, *"We make no distinction between one and another messenger."*

The true Believers *(Mu'minīn)* also believe in all the previously revealed scriptures, whether they be books or booklets *(called 'sahifa').* Some booklets have been mentioned in the Qur'ān, like those given to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, which have been referred to in the concluding verse of Surah Ala. It is obligatory for a Believer *(Mu'min)* to believe in all of Allāh's revealed scriptures, whether one has knowledge of these or not.

Describing the attributes of the pious peoples *(Muttaqīn)* further, Allāh says. *"And they are convinced about the Hereafter."* The three most important constituents of Belief/faith *(Imān)* are belief in Allāh, belief in the Risalāt prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and belief in resurrection after death. These have been mentioned in the above verses, together with the addition of Salāh and zakāh, because the most important aspect of Dīn *(Faith)* after Belief *(Imān)* is Salāh, followed by zakāh. Salāh is a physical form of worship, while zakāh is a financial form.

"These are the ones who are upon a great guidance from their Lord. These are the successful ones." Those who possess the above qualities are declared as being successful, meaning that they have attained Allāh's pleasure and will be rewarded by Heaven *(Jannah)* in the Hereafter. This is the ultimate success. (The verse mentions that these people are "upon" guidance, denoting that they are steadfast upon guidance).

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَأَنذَرۡتَهُمۡ أَمۡ لَمۡ تُنذِرۡهُمۡ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٦﴾ خَتَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمۡ وَعَلَىٰ سَمۡعِهِمۡۖ وَعَلَىٰٓ أَبۡصَٰرِهِمۡ غِشَٰوَةٞۖ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٞ ﴿٧﴾

(6)Verily, it is immaterial to the disbelievers whether you warn them or do not warn them. They wilt not believe. (7) Allāh has placed a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, while there is a veil over their eyes. Theirs shall be a terrible punishment

THE DEVIATION OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* AND THEIR PLIGHT IN THE HEREAFTER.

After describing the people of Belief *(Imān)*, Allāh speaks about those Disbelievers *(kuffār)* whom Allāh knows are destined to die as Disbelievers *(kuffār)*. They are people who know the truth yet refuse to believe and accept Islām. Every person is born as a Muslim, but it is his parents who mould him to be an adherent to another Dīn *(Religion)*. Eventually, the environment causes him to lose the capability of accepting Islām.

The Infidels *(kuffār)* themselves are the cause for their inability to accept Islām because they destroy the capability that they were born with. Allāh is only referred to as the One who seals their hearts because He has created man's actions. The matter requires much explanation, which cannot be justly dealt with here due to it's complexity.

Members of all religious denominations have encountered Islām and Muslims in their lives and they have also been convinced about the truth of Islām. However, millions of them not only stubbornly reject Islām, but they actually forbid others from accepting it. They even try to dissuade Muslims from Islām. They write against Islām and even instigate people to fight Islām on the grounds of ethnicity, tribalism and nationalism.

After realising these factors and assessing the obstinacy of people, one will surely see the truth of Allāh's statement, when He says, *"Verily, it is immaterial to the disbelievers whether you warn them or do not warn them. They will not believe."*

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَبِٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِ وَمَا هُم بِمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَمَا يَخۡدَعُونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمۡ وَمَا يَشۡعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٞ فَزَادَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَرَضٗاۖ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمُۢ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَكۡذِبُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

(8) Amongst people there are those who say, "We believe in Allāh and in the Final Day," whereas they are not believers. (9) They attempt to fool Allāh and the believers, but they only foot themselves without realising it (10) A disease lurks in their hearts, and Allāh increases their disease. Theirs shall be an excruciating punishment due to the lies that they speak.

THE HISTORY OF THE HYPOCRITES AND THE CAUSE OF THEIR HYPOCRISY.

After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah and Islām began to spread rapidly, the Jews (and especially their scholars) resolved to oppose him. There were many people from the Madinite tribes of the Aws and Khazraj who were bent on opposing the Muslims. However, because the Muslims were dominant in Madinah, they could not openly vent their opposition and enmity. It is for this reason that they plotted against the Muslims while pretending to be Muslims themselves.

Their leader was a person named Abdullāh bin Ubayy, who has been unanimously nominated the king of Madinah before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrival. He was due to be crowned but upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrival in Madinah, he never received a coronation. Since he could never have his way while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was present, he and his allies pretended to accept Islām, but secretly plotted to disunite the Muslims.

At one and the same time, they benefited from being Muslims, while not being ostracised by their tribes, nor losing their association with the infidels *(kuffār)*. Abdullāh bin Ubayy also relished the thought that he would soon ascend to kingship because he anticipated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would not remain long in Madinah. He therefore feigned being a Muslim, eagerly awaiting the fall of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Islām.

These hypocrites {called "*(Munāfiqīn)*} would tell the Muslims that they were also Muslims, while infidelity *(Kufr)* still lurked in their heals. They would also meet secretly with the Infidels *(kuffār)*, telling them that they sided with them. They performed Salāh to maintain their status but because they were Infidels *(kuffār)* at heart, they were not particular about performing their Salāh in congregation. Their Salāh was also performed reluctantly and without any sincerity.

To maintain their guise, they also participated in jihād *(religious war)* expeditions, but few actually reached the battlefield because they often deserted en route. Those who did reach the battlefield behaved treacherously and caused harm to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم.

These Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* would swear on oath that they were Muslims, but left no stone unturned to harass the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم. Whenever they were confronted, they would deny on oath that they have any involvement in the particular matter. Their mischief is mentioned in the second bowing *(ruku)* of Surah Al-Baqarah, the 21st bowing *(ruku)* of Surah Nisā, in Surah Hashar and in Surah Munafiqūn. Surah Barā'ah discusses their evil behaviour in detail.

Books on the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم biography, like *"Al Bidayah wan Nihayah"* and *"Awā'ilu Kitābul Māghāzi"* (*v.3, p.336 to 340*) record the names of all the Jewish Rabbis who harassed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as well as the names of all the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* who belonged to the Aws and Khazraj tribes.

Despite their evils, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always behaved cordially

towards them and patiently endured the harassment that proceeded from them. He continued to preach Islām in the kindest manner so that they may be guided to accept Islām.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also realised that if he were stern with them, the other non-Muslim Arab tribes who were unaware of the situation would think that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ill-treats his "followers". This would then dissuade them from accepting Islām.

However, the time did eventually come when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to drive them out of his Mosque *(Masjid)*. The details of this can be found at the beginning of the second volume of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم biography written by Ibn Hishām رحمة الله عليه.

Allāh says in the above verses, *"Amongst people there are those who say, 'We believe in Allāh and in the Final Day, whereas they are not believers* (but they merely lie to people) Belief *(Imān)* is not restricted to a verbal utterance, but must be accompanied by a firm belief in the heart. A person will never be regarded as a Believer *(Mu'min)* till he believes in everything that Allāh revealed to His Prophets, and which He has commanded that people believe in.

Allāh describes the hypocrites in the following words in Surah Mā'idah: 'From *those who say, 'We believe!' with their mouths whereas their hearts have not believed."* The deception that they employed is referred to in the Qur'ān and Ahādīth as "nifāq" (hypocrisy). Those who adopt this behaviour are called Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*.

The Arabic *word "nifāq"* is derived *from* the *root word of* "nifāq," *which* literally *refers* to a tunnel that has two openings on either side. The act *of* hypocrisy has been termed "nifāq' because the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* enter Islām from one side and then exit from the other side.

"Nifāq" is the worst form of infidelity *(Kufr)* because it is a conglomeration of disbelief, lying and deception. In fact, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* even fool the Infidels *(kuffār)* because they are not really loyal to them either. They are really not affiliated to any party. Allāh says in verses 142 and 143 of Surah Nisā, *"Indeed the hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh whereas he deceives them. When they stand up to Salāh they stand up lazily, to be seen by people and they remember Allāh only a little therein. Swaying between, they are neither towards these, nor towards those. You shall never find a way for him whom Allāh has led astray."*

The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* are never loyal to any party, but will incline towards the party that offers them the most lucrative worldly gain. Then too, they will only align with that group for as long as they receive benefit. Thereafter, they will desert them.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has equated a hypocrite to a lone goat between two herds. She sometimes joins one herd to fall pregnant, and sometimes joins the next to attain her goal. [*Mishkāt, p. 17*]

Allāh says, *"They attempt to fool Allāh and the believers, but they only fool themselves without realising." While* they think that they have fooled Allāh and the Muslims, they will taste the consequences of their deception.

The disease of hypocrisy has intensified throughout the ages. Jealousy, enmity and love for material wealth causes it. The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* suffer disgrace in this world and will also be subjected to the most severe punishment in the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Hudhaifa رضی الله عنه stated, "Nifāq was prevalent during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Nowadays, there exists either Islām or infidelity *(Kufr)*.' [*Bukhari*] The commentators of Ahādīth have interpreted his statement to mean that people cannot assess the condition of each other's hearts. None can say for sure whether another person is a Hypocrite *(Munāfiq)* or not. Nifāq was recognised during the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم time because Allāh used to inform the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about who exactly the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* were.

A person cannot also term another as a Infidel *(kāfir)* unless he hears unambiguous words of infidelity *(Kufr)* from his lips. Otherwise, a person must be regarded as a Muslim if he calls himself one.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ (11) أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ (12) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا۟ كَمَآ ءَامَنَ ٱلنَّاسُ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَآ ءَامَنَ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ (13) وَإِذَا لَقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ شَيَٰطِينِهِمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ (14) ٱللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (15)

(11) When they are told, "Do not spread anarchy on earth" they say, "We are but reformists." (12) Behold! They are the anarchists, but they do not perceive it. (13) When they are told, "Believe like the people believe," they say, should we believe like the fools believe?" Behold! They are indeed the fools, but they know it not. (14) When they meet the believers they say, "We believe!" And when they are alone with their devils, they say, "We are certainly with you. We were only jesting." (15) It is Allāh who jests with them, and they wander blind in their rebellion.

THE CLAIM AND BEHAVIOUR OF THE HYPOCRITES.

Allāh says, *"When they (the Hypocrites (Munāfiqīn)) are told, Do not spread anarchy on earth, they say, 'We are but reformists. Behold! They are the anarchists, but they do not perceive it"* The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* had a hand in all the antagonistic attempts against the Muslims, but vehemently denied such involvement when confronted. They used to disclose the secrets of the Muslims to the Infidels *(kuffār)* enemy, would forbid people from accepting Islām, and used to mock the Muslims.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* pleased both the Muslims and the Infidels *(kuffār), and* maintained relations with both. They interpreted their *"nifāq"* as *'Islāh'* (reformation). While

they thought that they belonged to either party, neither of the two parties ever accepted them as being a part of them.

Their claim of being *"reformists"* is false. In fact, they will suffer the grievous consequences of their lies in both worlds, but they fail to perceive this fact.

"When they are told, 'Believe like the people believe,' they say, 'Should we believe like the fools believe?" The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* referred to the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم, especially the Muslims from the Aws and Khazraj tribes, to be fools. In so saying, they considered themselves to be intelligent people. Allāh replies to them by saying, *"Behold! They are indeed the fools, but they know it not."* They are foolish to subject themselves to the scorn of both the Muslims and the Infidels *(kuffār)*.

The behaviour of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* is such that *"When they meet the believers they say, 'We believe!' And when they are alone with their devils* (i.e. the Infidels *(kuffār)* leaders), they say, *'We are certainly with you. We were only jesting* (when we told the Muslims that we are also Muslims). It is Allāh who jests with them" i.e. Allāh will punish them for their 'jest.' Allāh 'jests' with them by granting them respite in this world, so that they intensify their misdeeds. They think that they are in good stead, whereas they are actually heading for Hell.

They mock and jeer the Muslims in this world, whereas, in the Hereafter, it will be the Muslims who will laugh at them. Details of this will be mentioned in the second bowing *(ruku)* of Surah Hadīd, Insha Allāh.

"And they wander blind in their rebellion." The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* think that their wealth and properties will guarantee their success. Little do they realise that they are being deceived by this. Allāh says in verses 55 and 56 of Surah Mu'minūn, *"Do they think that by Us granting them an increase in wealth and sons, We wish to hasten in granting them good? But they fail to perceive."*

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُاْ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَٰرَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُواْ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿16﴾

(16) These are the people who have purchased deviation for the price of guidance. Their trade shall neither be profitable nor will they be guided.

THE HYPOCRITES *(MUNĀFIQĪN)* PURCHASE DEVIATION FOR GUIDANCE

Allāh has created every person with a natural inclination towards Belief *(Imān)*. He has also granted people the faculty of understanding. Thereafter He has sent His Prophets *(Anbiya)* علیهم السلام and numerous divine scriptures. Whoever fails to believe after all this, must certainly be regarded as one who purchases *"deviation for the price of guidance."*

Such people have destroyed their faculties and have accrued deprivation and loss to themselves. They turn away from guidance for the measly gains of this transitory world, thereby dooming themselves to eternal damnation. It is

indeed foolish of them to think that their behaviour will profit them.

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّآ أَضَآءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُۥ ذَهَبَ ٱللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ
فِى ظُلُمَٰتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿17﴾ صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْىٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿18﴾

(17) Their similitude is like that of a person who kindles a fire. When his surroundings light up, Allāh snatches away their light and leaves them in the darkness, unable to see. (18) Deaf, dumb and blind, they will never return.

THE FIRST SIMILITUDE OF THE HYPOCRITES.

In the above verses, Allāh depicts the condition of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* using the example of a person who lights a fire to have light around him. In a similar manner, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* feign being Muslims so that they can attain the worldly benefits of being Muslims (like being guaranteed safety and security). However, when they die, and are subjected to the severest punishment, the temporary benefits of this world (and their false claims) will be useless to them, just as the person kindling the fire will be left helpless when Allāh takes away the light of the fire.

"Deaf dumb and blind, they will never return." This is the ultimate result of these people. They become deaf and blind to the truth, and cannot speak a word of truth either. They will never return to Islām because of their greatly deteriorated condition.

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَٰتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَٰبِعَهُمْ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِم مِّنَ
ٱلصَّوَٰعِقِ حَذَرَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ مُحِيطٌۢ بِٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿19﴾ يَكَادُ ٱلْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَٰرَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَآ
أَضَآءَ لَهُم مَّشَوْا۟ فِيهِ وَإِذَآ أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا۟ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ
وَأَبْصَٰرِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿20﴾

(19) Or (their similitude is) like torrential rain from the sky, wherein there is a multitude of darkness, thunder and lightning. For fear of death, they place their fingers in their ears because of the thunderclap. Allāh encompasses the disbelievers (20) The time is near that the lightning will snatch away their eyesight Whenever it lights up for them, they walk therein. When darkness prevails over them, they stand still. If Allāh wills, He could take away their faculties of hearing and seeing. Verily Allāh has power over all things.

THE SECOND SIMILITUDE OF THE HYPOCRITES.

Allāh depicts the example of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* as people trapped in a lashing storm. The thunder and lightning instils such fear in them that they fear the loss of their lives. They thrust their fingers into their ears to cut out the noise. The lightning is so bright that it could blind them in a flash. They are totally bewildered and can only take a few steps in the light of the lightning. Then, when the light has vanished, they stand rooted to the spot.

Such is the condition of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. When they see the light of Islām flashing before their eyes, as the *Muslims* gain victory, they run towards Islām. However, once the darkness of worldly love and carnal passions seize them, they fall back and stand isolated from Islām. However, Allāh is well aware of their behaviour and *'If Allāh wills, He could take away their faculties of hearing and seeing. Verily Allāh has power over all things."*

The acclaimed commentator, Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه, interprets the similitude to mean that the Belief *(Imān)* of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*, being tainted with infidelity *(Kufr)* and deception, is similar to rain that accompanies darkness, lightning and thunder. Although rain is beneficial, it becomes detrimental when accompanied by these elements.

The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* adopt nifāq *(hypocrisy)* to be saved from the harms that befall the open Infidels *(kuffār)*. This is similar to thrusting the fingers into one's ears to cut out the noise of thunder, just as placing ones fingers into one's ears will not drown the noise of thunderclaps, so too the nifāq *(hypocrisy)* of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* will not help them against Allāh's decrees and adversities.

Because of the severity of the situation, the person caught in the storm hesitates about what he has to do, fearing that the lightning should deprive him of his eyesight. Similarly, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* are hesitant in their actions and will proceed only when they see the opportunity. Otherwise they hold back. [*Baydawi v. 1, p.39*]

Some commentators have mentioned that the first similitude is of those Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* who are extremely staunch in their hypocritical stance. Allāh refers to them when he says that He will leave "*them in* the darkness, unable to see.

They say that the second similitude applies to those Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* who are very doubtful. The truth of Islam has penetrated their hearts and they are inclined towards it. However, the attractions of the world prove to be an obstacle in their path and destroy their inclination.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ فِرَٰشًا وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

(21) Oh people! Worship your Lord, Who has created you and those before you, so that you may become abstinent; (22) He Who has made the earth a bedding for you, the sky a roof and has sent water for you from the sky, thereby extracting fruit for you as your sustenance. So never ascribe partners to Allāh knowingly.

THE INVITATION AND PROOF FOR TAUHĪD *(ONENESS OF ALLĀH)*

After making mention of the sincere believers *(Mu'minīn)*, the Infidels

(kuffār) and the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*, Allāh proceeds to extend the invitation of Tauhīd *(Oneness of Allāh)* to humanity at large. Herein also expounds His creative capability, and expresses His power and favour, using examples that even the most simple-minded person can relate to.

In the first of the above two verses, Allāh exhorts man to worship Him, for He is man's Creator and Nurturer. To avert the argument of those who claim that their parents created them, Allāh immediately adds that He also created *"those before you.'* Allāh did not stop at creating man, but He also keeps him alive and has created all the amenities and means for the survival for man.

If man worships Allāh, he will acquire the quality of piety *(taqwa)*, which basically refers to abstinence. There are various levels of piety *(taqwa)*, the highest being the level whereupon a person is conscious of Allāh at every moment, and lives and dies for Him. Abstaining from minor sins also constitutes piety *(taqwa)*: A person who is continuously conscious of Allāh's presence will not sin and since he does not sin, he will naturally be saved from Hell. It is for this reason that certain commentators have translated the concluding words of the verse as *"So that you be saved from Hell"* instead of *"So that you may become abstinent"*.

The greatest sin is Polytheism *(shirk)*, while the best form of worship is the belief in Tauhīd *(Oneness of Allāh)*. By abstaining from polytheism *(shirk)* and other sins, while having a firm conviction in Tauhīd *(Oneness of Allāh)*, one will be saved from the torment of Hell.

Although every creation is a manifest sign of Allāh's power, He expounds three signs that may be comprehended by one and all. Allāh says that it is *"He Who has made the earth a bedding for you"* Even a blind person realizes that he is walking and living on the earth. Allāh has made the earth a source of habitation and vegetation for man so that he may live his life here. The mere existence of the earth proves that someone must have created it. If Allāh had completely covered the earth with mountains or with water, it would have been extremely difficult for man to live.

Allāh then says "He has created 'the sky (as) a roof" in addition to this,

1. *Distress is lessened.*
2. *Evil thoughts are reduced.*
3. *Doubts and fear are dispelled*
4. *Allāh is remembered.*
5. *Allāh 's grandeur fills the heart.*
6. *Evil anxieties disappear*
7. *It is beneficial in curing diseases linked to black bile.*
8. *It consoles an eager heart.*
9. *It is conducive to fostering love between people.*
10. *It is the direction faced by those who supplicate to Allāh.*

Allāh says further that He *"has sent water for you from the sky, thereby*

extracting fruits for you as your sustenance." From the same ground, Allāh extracts various types of fruits with different flavours. In pondering over this fact, one can ascertain Allāh's power of creation and nurturing.

Allāh concludes this verse by addressing man, *"So never ascribe partners to Allāh knowingly"* Man cannot fall into the error of worshipping other beings after pondering over these signs that have been made so clear to him.

وَإِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

(23) If you are in doubt with regard to what We have revealed upon Our slave, then produce a Surah the like thereof And call your allies besides Allāh if you are truthful

A PROOF TO THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND THE MIRACULOUS NATURE OF THE QUR'ĀN.

Once a person believes in Allāh, he needs to recognise Allāh's qualities and needs to learn how to worship Him. However, man cannot know these things by himself. Therefore, Allāh has sent the Prophet's *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام to teach man these things in his own language. To prove the veracity of these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام, Allāh allowed them to perform various miracles, which best suited the times.

The Arabs in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were extremely eloquent and proficient in the Arabic language. They used to convene gatherings wherein they recited poetic verses to each other. People used to hang their poems on the Ka'ba, thereby challenging anyone to compose better poetry.

Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a Prophet to the whole of humanity till dooms day *(Qiyamah)*. The beloved Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has performed numerous miracles, which are enumerated in his biographies. As the crown of all these miracles, Allāh revealed the Qur'ān to him because the Arabs were so proficient in their language. It is a miracle lasting to this day, which none can challenge.

One of the famous poets at that time was Sayyidina Labīd bin Rabī'ah رضى الله عنه whose poems often offered a challenge to others during the period of ignorance. After he became a Muslim, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once asked him what poems he had composed after accepting Islām. He replied by saying that Allāh had replaced his poetry by the likes of Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Al Imrān. [*Al Isābah v.3 p.326*]

In the above verse Allāh challenges the Infidels *(kuffār)* by saying, *"If you are in doubt with regard to what We have revealed (i.e. the Qur'ān) upon Our slave, then produce a Surah the like thereof And call your allies besides Allāh if you are truthful."*

Initially, the Infidels *(kuffār)* were challenged to produce ten Surahs like

those of the Qur'ān but they were unable to do so. Eventually the above challenge of one Surah was issued.

Allāh says in Surah Yunus, *"Say, 'Produce a single Surah the like thereof and call whomsoever you can besides Allāh, if you are truthful"*

Certain ignorant people during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"If we wish, we could say the same thing (as the Qur'ān)."* However, they were unable to accomplish such a feat. Some people did try to compose some verses to rival the Qur'ān, but they mere miserably unsuccessful Allāh says in verse 88 of Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *'Say, 'If mankind and the jinn combine to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they would not be able to produce its example even if they are assistants to each other."*

فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟ وَلَن تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِى وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

(24) If you cannot accomplish the feat, and you will never be able to do so, then fear that Fire, the fuel of which is men and stones. It has been prepared for the disbelievers.

PEOPLE WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF THE QUR'ĀN.

History bears testimony to the fact that none has ever been able to produce a single Surah equivalent to even the smallest Surah of the Qur'ān. The above prediction therefore has been most accurate.

Since there is a need for people throughout the ages to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh has made His miracle everlasting so that everyone may witness its miraculous nature, there by be in convinced of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم authenticity as Allāh's Prophet.

The truth of the Qur'ān is evident, yet some people, after hearing it, still choose to reject it because of obstinacy and national prejudices. In so doing, they expose themselves to the torment of hell. It is for this reason that Allāh informs them that when they cannot meet the challenge, they should *'fear (entry into) that Fire, the fuel of which is men and stones. It has been prepared for the disbelievers"*

Commentators say that the stones to be burnt in Hell will be the stone idols that the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* carved. Surah Anbiya contains the following address to the Infidels *(kuffār)*: *"Verily you, together with what you worshipped besides Allāh, shall be the fuel of Hell (Jahannam). You will all* pass thereby. "[*verse 98*]

"Durrul Manthūr' *(v.1, p.36)* reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the stones mentioned in this verse refer to sulphur which Allāh will create as He pleases.

وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ

كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَأُتُوا۟ بِهِۦ
مُتَشَٰبِهًا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

(25) And convey glad tidings to those who believe and do good deeds, that theirs shall be gardens beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are given any fruit as sustenance therein, they say, "This is what we were fed with before." They are given fruit of the same resemblance. Therein they shall have purified spouses and they will abide therein forever.

THE GLAD TIDINGS OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* FOR THE BELIEVERS.

THE FIRST bounty mentioned in this verse is that the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* will abide in amazing gardens called Heaven *(Jannah)*. There will be magnificent homes there, as mentioned in Surah Saff where Allāh says, *"and palatial homes in the everlasting Heaven (Jannah)."*

Allāh mentions that rivers will be flowing beneath these gardens. Surah Muhammad mentions that there will be rivers of pure water that will never spoil, rivers of milk that will never turn sour, rivers of wine that will be extremely tasty, and rivers of pure honey.

The wine of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be for pleasure but will neither intoxicate nor cause headaches as mentioned in Surah Sāffāt and Surah Wāqi'ah.

THE SECOND bounty mentioned concerns the delightful fruits of Heaven *(Jannah)* that they will be offered. When the fruit is given to them, they will say, 'This is what we were fed with before.' They will say this because they will be given *"fruit of the same resemblance"* (although the taste will be different).

Some commentators have interpreted *"This is what we were fed with before"* to refer to what was eaten in this world. Other commentators say that it refers to other fruit that were previously given to them in Heaven *(Jannah)*. Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه says that the first interpretation is better, meaning that the fruits given in Heaven *(Jannah)* will resemble the fruits of this world.

Allāma Nasafi رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to both, the fruits of this world, as well as those of the Hereafter. The fruits of Heaven *(Jannah)* will resemble those of this world in appearance so that people do not find them strange. In this way they will be tempted to eat it. However, the taste of the fruit in Heaven *(Jannah)* will be totally different.

Allāma Nasafi رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to both, the fruits of this world, as well as those of the Hereafter. The fruits of Heaven *(Jannah)* will resemble those of this world in appearance so that people do not find them strange. In this way they will be tempted to eat it. However, the taste of the fruit in Heaven *(Jannah)* will be totally different.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه says that the fruits of Heaven *(Jannah)* will only resemble those of this world in name, i.e. the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will recognize the fruits to be apples, pomegranates, etc. However, the taste of these fruits will be much superior to the taste of worldly fruit. Allāh says in verse

17 of Surah Sajdah that *'no soul knows what is in store for him in Heaven' (Jannah).*

Some people have raised an objection by saying that if one accepts the first interpretation, it would mean that the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will receive only the fruits of this world. This objection is rather trivial because nothing prevents the possibility of them receiving other types of fruit afterwards, which do not resemble the fruits of this world. It is also not strange to believe that they will always be given fruit that resembles those of this world because the taste and pleasure derived will always vary.

THE THIRD bounty mentioned in the verse is that the people of Heaven *(Jannah) "shall have purified spouses"* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه interprets the verse to mean that the women of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be pure without any impurity or any offensive qualities. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that they will be pure from menstruation, urine, excrement, mucus, phlegm, bile and semen. They will also not need to bear children, due to which there will be no after-birth bleeding.

Sayyidina Qatadah رحمة الله عليه says that they will be pure from harm, disobedience and sin. The gist of all these interpretations is that these women will be pure from anything that is offensive in any way. They will be physically and spiritually pure, and will never disobey their husbands. *[Ibn Kathīr]*

Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes that the word *"purified"* has been used instead of 'pure.' This indicates that someone made them pure, viz. Allāh. With regard to the beauty of these damsels, Allāh says in Surah Rahmān, *"They are like rubies and coral" [verse 58].* Another verse states that they are *"extremely fair in complexion, with large black eyes, like treasured pearls." [Surah Wāqi'ah, verses 22/3]*

THE FOURTH bounty mentioned is that fact that *"they will abide therein forever."* They will not leave Heaven *(Jannah)* nor will they ever be made to leave.

Muslim reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that an announcer will proclaim to the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* saying, 'It has been ordained that you will always remain healthy and will never fall ill. You will always remain alive and will never die. You will always remain young and will never aged. You will always remain in good stead, and will never be impoverished.' [*v.2, p.38*]

The bounties of this world are always tainted. Happiness in this world is always accompanied by grief, illness always accompanies health, while flowers also have thorns. Wealth and status will always draw enmity and jealousy. The fundamental point is that all worldly bounties are transitory, whereas those of the Hereafter are eternal.

None shall ever have to fear that his bounties will ever be lost there.

۞إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِۦٓ أَن يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا ۚ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَـٰذَا مَثَلًا

(26) Verily Allāh is not ashamed to quote the analogy of even of a mosquito or something more insignificant. As for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord. As for the disbelievers, they say, "What does Allāh intend with these analogies?"

THE IMĀN *(BELIEF)* OF BELIEVERS STRENGTHENS WITH QUR'ĀNIC ANALOGIES, WHILE THE DISBELIEVERS RAISE ABSURD OBJECTIONS.

Since the Infidels *(kuffār)* could not meet the challenge of the Qur'ān, they opted to raise objections against the Qur'ān to support their stance of rejection. Sayyidina Qatada رحمة الله عليه reports that when Allāh cited the analogy of the spider and the fly in the Qur'ān, the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* scoffed at these saying, *"What does Allāh intend with these analogies?"* [*Ibn Kathīr*] They meant to say that Allāh's elevated position does not behove Him to draw comparisons of such lowly creatures. Therefore, they argued that the Qur'ān cannot be Allāh's speech.

Allāma Nasafi رحمة الله عليه writes that when the analogies of the spider and the fly were revealed, the Jews laughed, saying that these do not resemble Allāh's speech. By saying this, they meant to deny the authenticity of the Qur'ān. [*v.1, p.35*]

These people failed to realise that such simple analogies merely illustrate the comparisons. They do not reflect the status of the person making the comparison.

Allāh replies to the objection by saying, *"Verily Allāh is not ashamed to quote the analogy of even a mosquito or something more insignificant* (or for that matter even something larger in size). *As for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord (and that it is perfectly applicable). As for the disbelievers, they say, 'What does Allāh intend with these analogies?"*

يُضِلُّ بِهِۦ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِى بِهِۦ كَثِيرًاۚ وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾
ٱلَّذِينَ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَ ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مِيثَٰقِهِۦ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦٓ أَن يُوصَلَ
وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

(26) Allāh sends many astray thereby and guides many thereby. Only the disobedient ones are sent astray thereby. (27) Those who breach Allāh's pledge after solemnising it, who sever those things that Allāh has commanded that they join, and who spread anarchy on earth. These are certainly the losers.

QUR'ĀNIC ANALOGIES ARE A SOURCE OF DEVIATION FOR THE DISOBEDIENT ONES.

Allāh uses numerous analogies in the Qur'ān for man's guidance, but there are many who chose to object to them. Their rejection and objection then become a cause for them to go astray and lead others astray as well. However, the Believers (*Muminīn*), realising that these messages are from Allāh, find their Belief *(Imān)* strengthening with these illustrations.

The Infidels *(kuffār)* increase their disbelief infidelity *(Kufr)* by rejecting the Qur'ānic verses. They are not prone to deliberation, thereby causing themselves to be misled by words of guidance. This is the unfortunate plight of all the Infidels *(kuffār)*, including the Hypocrites (*Munafiqīn*).

THE TRAITS OF THE "FĀSIQĪN" (*THE DISOBEDIENT ONES*)

Allāh then describes who is meant by the *"disobedient ones"* (*Fāsiqīn*). Allāh says that they are *"Those who breach Allāh 's pledge after solemnising it."*

The *"pledge"* mentioned in the verse may refer to man's intelligence. Allāh has granted man intelligence so that he may use it to recognise Allāh and to worship only Him.

The *"pledge"* may also refer to the pledge of "Alist" (as mentioned In the Ahādīth) where Allāh extracted the souls of Sayyidina Ādam's عليه السلام entire progeny from his back. They emerged in small sizes like little ants, whereafter Allāh asked them, *"Am I not your Lord?* They all replied in the affirmative. This incident took place on the plain of Na'mān. [*Mishkāt, p. 24*]

This pledge is mentioned in verse 172 of Surah A'rāf where Allāh says. *"When your Lord extracted from the backs of the children of Ādam* عليه السلام *their progeny and called them to witness over themselves saying, 'Am I not your Lord?' They replied, 'Certainly! We attest to it.*

Certain Ahādīth mention that after taking this pledge from mankind, Allāh told them, "I call the seven heavens and the seven earths to witness this together with your father Ādam You should not say on the Day of Resurrection *(Qiyamah)* that you had no knowledge of this pledge. Remember that there is no deity besides Me and that none is My partner. I shall send My messengers to you to remind you of this pledge, and I shall send My books to you."

The people replied, 'We are witness to the fact that You are our Lord and our Deity. We have no other Lord, nor any other deity." [*Mishkāt, p. 24*]

The above verse could also refer to the pledge that Allāh had taken from the Ahlul Kitāb (*the Jews and Christians*), to propagate the Books that were revealed to them. Allāh says in verse 187 of Surah Āl Imrān, *"When Allāh took a pledge from those given the book (saying), 'You must surely expound it to mankind and not conceal it.' They then threw it behind their backs and sold it at a measly price. Evil indeed was that which they sold"*

The second trait of the Disobedient (*Fāsiqīn*) mentioned in the verse is that they are those *"who sever those things that Allāh has commanded that they join"* This refers to those commands that apply to man's relationship with Allāh, as well as those that apply to man's relationship with fellow men.

Allāh has commanded man to accept all the Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and also commands him not to believe in only some while rejecting others. This belief is contained in verse 285 of Surah Al-Baqarah, where Allāh quotes the Believers (*Mu'minīn*) as saying, *"We make no distinction between one and another messenger"*

Also included in the implication of this verse is the need to maintain cordial family ties and relationships with fellow Muslims which the Disobedient

(Fāsiqīn) tend to sever. In short, failing to comply with any injunction of the Shari'ah is tantamount to severing Allāh's commands.

In verses 20 and 21 of Surah Ra'd, Allāh praises *"Those who fulfil the pledge taken with Allāh and do not breach the covenant. Those who join that which Allāh has commanded that it be joined"* In verse 27 of the same Surah, Allāh says further, *"Those who breached Allāh's pledge after ratifying it, sever that which Allāh commanded that it be joined and spread corruption on earth. Theirs shall be a curse and theirs shall be misfortune in the Hereafter."*

The third trait of the Disobedient (*Fāsiqīn*) is that they are those *"who spread anarchy on earth.* "Included in this trait is:

- *Adopting infidelity (Kufr), Polytheism (shirk) and hypocrisy.*
- *Rejecting oneness of Allāh (Tauhīd).*
- *Preventing others from accepting oneness of Allāh (Tauhīd).*
- *Mocking at the Believers (Mu'minīn) and those who stand for the truth.*
- *Usurping the rights of others.*
- *Stealing and looting*
- *Murder.*

All other forms of sin and vice are also included in the above.

Allāh says about these Disobedient (*Fāsiqīn*), *"These are certainly the losers."* Such people think that they are successful because they have not compromised their material wealth by believing in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. However, they fail to realise the eternal damnation that awaits them in the Hereafter.

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَكُنتُمْ أَمْوَٰتًا فَأَحْيَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ
ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

(28) How can you disbelieve in Allāh when you were once dead, then He granted you life. Thereafter He will grant you death again, where after He will revive you, and then you will return to Him.

THE INVITATION TO BELIEVE IN TAUHĪD IS REPEATED.

The above verse repeats the invitation to oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* which was previously mentioned in verse 21. Allāh asks people for the reason for their disbelief in Allāh. It was He Who gave them life when they were lifeless drops of sperm. Allāh granted man his body and soul. Allāh also granted him the intelligence to deduce that Only He can be man's Lord and Deity.

When the prescribed time arrives, Allāh will claim the soul of every man. Allāh will then resurrect each person to appear before Him on the Day of Judgment.

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَسَوَّىٰهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

(29) It is He Who created for you whatever is on earth. Thereafter He turned His attention to the sky and perfected it as seven skies. He has knowledge of all things.

THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.

In the above verse, Allāh describes His generosity to man. Allāh has not only created man, but then created the means necessary for his survival on earth. Everything on earth has been created for man's use, which he is free to exploit within the confines of the Shari'ah.

The earth is one of the greatest bounties Allāh has granted to man. Allāh says in Surah Rahmān, *"We have made the earth for living creatures."* [*verse 10*]

Says Allāh in Surah Mulk, *"It is He Who has subjugated the earth for you, so walk upon its roads and eat from its provision. To Him will the return be."* [*verse 15*]

Allāh has created everything on the earth for man's benefit. These include the plants, trees, minerals and a multitude of other benefits that cannot be enumerated. Man is permitted to utilise these according to Allāh's commands and be thankful for them.

Even those elements that seem harmful at first may be beneficial; notice how certain medicines are made from snakes and scorpions. Allāh has even inspired man with ideas of how to utilise the various types of creation. This verse also proves that everything is permissible, except those things which the Shari'ah (course of Islam) has forbidden.

Just as it is necessary to use things as they are meant to be used, it is necessary to use them according to the dictates of the Shari'ah. It would therefore be prohibited *(harām)* to usurp the property of another and use it for praiseworthy purposes. Similarly, it will prohibited *(harām)* to use anything beneficial for harmful purposes. The details of this injunction are too numerous to mention here.

Allāh says, in [*verses 8 to 11*]. These verses suggest that the earth was created before the skies, which were in the form of smoke. These were then made into seven skies.

Allāh says in Surah Nāzi'āt, *"Allāh raised the roof of the sky and perfected it. He made the night dark and exposed its day. Thereafter, He spread out the earth."* [*Verses 27 to 30*] These verses on the other hand, suggest that the earth followed the skies in creation. The explanation to this seeming discrepancy is that Allāh first created the basic structure of the earth, placing the weighty mountains on it. Thereafter, Allāh created the seven skies, which were in the form of smoke. It was only then that Allāh spread the earth out as we see it.

Allāh says, *'and perfected it as seven skies."* This suggests that the skies are perfect in their construction. They have no joints, no ruptures nor any other

defect. Allāh says in Surah Mulk, *"He is the Mighty, the Most Merciful Who created the seven skies in layers. You will not notice any irregularities in Rahmān 's creation. Look again. Do you see any ruptures?'* [*verses 2 and 3*]

A verse in Surah Qāf says, *"Have they not looked at the sky above them, (and seen) how We have created it and decorated it? There are no holes therein."* [*verse 6*]

Allāh then concludes the verse of Surah Al-Baqarah by saying, *"He has knowledge of all things."* Allāh has knowledge of whatever has been in the vast universe in the past, whatever is there presently and whatever will be there in the future.

Allāh has knowledge of every believer and disbeliever and of every guided and misguided person. He is well aware of their beliefs and deeds and will reward or punish them accordingly.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿30﴾

(30) When your Lord said to the angels, "I am about to place a viceroy on earth." They said, "Will You place therein someone who will cause anarchy therein and spill blood, whereas we glorify Your praises and proclaim Your purity?" Allāh said, "Indeed, I know what you do not know."

THE CREATION OF SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام AND ALLĀH'S DISCUSSION WITH THE ANGELS.

Before the creation of man, the jinn lived on earth. Because their temperament is fraught with evil, they caused much anarchy and bloodshed on earth. Therefore, when Allāh expressed His intention to create man as a viceroy on earth, the angels based their deduction on the jinn and asked Allāh, *"Will You place therein someone who will cause anarchy therein and spill blood..."*

Some commentators have mentioned that the angels queried man's creation when they learnt that man was to be created with a conglomeration of carnal passions, anger and intelligence. Since the first two emotions spur one to commit deeds like anarchy and bloodshed, they could not fathom how the third quality of intelligence (which promotes obedience to Allāh glorifying His praises) could overcome the first two. This was so because they had never before experienced any beings that were a combination of these opposing traits. They had never before experienced beings that, despite possessing evil qualities, could express good behaviour, justice and other good characteristics. It is for this reason that they posed the question to Allāh.

Other commentators have mentioned that the angels knew of man's evil behaviour because of the fact that Allāh intended to create a viceroy. In other words, since the task of a viceroy is to enforce justice and to maintain order, it

would mean that anarchy will reign on earth, thereby necessitating the presence of a viceroy.

According to Sayyidina Qatadah رحمة الله عليه, Allāh informed the angels that man will spread anarchy and bloodshed on earth and that is why they asked the question.

The question of the angels was not an objection to Allāh's plan. Objecting to Allāh's plan will constitute infidelity *(Kufr)*, and the angels (being innocent) cannot perpetrate disobedience *(Kufr)*. Allāh speaks about their innocence in Surah Anbiya [*verse 27*], where He says, *"They do not speak ahead of Him and duly carry out His orders.*

Allāh also says about the angels in Surah Tahrīm [*verse 6*], *"They do not disobey the commands that Allāh issues to them."*

The angels then added, *whereas we glorify Your praises and proclaim Your purity (from all defects)?"* Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه has interpreted the word "nuqaddisu" (*"translated above as proclaim Your purity"*) to mean that they express Allāh's grandeur and declare His purity from whatever the irreligious people attribute to Him. Another meaning of this phrase is *"We purify ourselves from all sins for Your pleasure."*

وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ ٱلْأَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنۢبِـُٔونِى بِأَسْمَآءِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

(31) Allāh taught Ādam all the names, and then presented these before the angels saying, "Inform Me of the names of these if you are truthful."

ALLĀH INFORMS SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام OF THE NAMES OF ALL THINGS AND THEN ASKS THE ANGELS ABOUT THESE NAMES.

When Allāh instilled the soul into the Sayyidina Aadam's عليه السلام body, he came alive and was able to learn. Allāh then taught him the names of all things. Thereafter, Allāh placed all these things before the angels and asked them, *"Inform Me of the names of these if you are truthful?"* i.e. Inform me of these names if you are true in your belief that you are more worthy of being viceroys due to your innocence, and if you are true in your claim that it is not wise to create a creation that will cause anarchy and bloodshed. [*Baydawi*]

Certain commentators have mentioned that the name Ādam is not an Arabic word, just like the name Āzar. Others claim that it is an Arabic word, derived from the root word *'udmah* which means 'brownish in colour.'

Allāh taught Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام everything, including the specific names of small and large utensils. The angels were unable to identify the names of these things, thereby establishing that humans are superior to angels by virtue of their superior knowledge. Therefore, they are more worthy of being viceroys. It is evident that it is not possible to execute any deed without the necessary

knowledge.

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾

(32) The angels submitted, "We proclaim Your purity! We possess only the knowledge that You have given to us. Without doubt, You are the All Knowing, the Wise."

THE HELPLESSNESS AND ADMISSION OF THE ANGELS.

When the angels realised that humans were blessed with the wealth of knowledge, they conceded their weakness saying, *"We proclaim Your purity! We possess only the knowledge that You have given to us. Without doubt. You are the All Knowing, the Wise."* In saying this, they admitted that none can question the intentions of Allāh, Whose knowledge and wisdom are matchless.

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

(33) Allāh said, "Oh Ādam! Inform them of the names of these things." When He informed them of their names, Allāh said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen things of the heavens and the earth, and that I know what you disclose and what you conceal"

THE KNOWLEDGE AND VIRTUE OF SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام BECOMES APPARENT.

When the angels were unable to mention the names of those things that Allāh had presented before them, He commanded Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, saying, *"Oh Ādam! Inform them of the names of these things."*

Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام complied, thereby illustrating both the inability of the angels and his own superior knowledge. When he did this, Allāh said to the angels, *"Did I not tell you that I know the unseen things of the heavens and the earth, and that I know what you disclose and what you conceal."*

Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes that Allāh implies that the angels should have rather maintained silence when Allāh announced His intention to create man. They should have rather waited to see what man's virtues and excellence were before commenting.

Certain commentators have interpreted *"I know what you disclose"* to mean that Allāh is well aware of the question of the angels when they asked, *"Will You place therein someone who will cause anarchy therein and spill blood"*. They say that the phrase, *"what you conceal"* refers to the thought in their minds that they are more worthy of being viceroy than man.

These verses highlight the importance of knowledge and also indicate that

knowledge is imperative for vicegerency. Allāh says in another verse, *"Can those who possess knowledge be equal to those who do not possess knowledge?"*

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

(34) When We told the angels, "Prostrate to Ādam."' they all prostrated, except Iblīs. He refused and was arrogant And he was from amongst the disbelievers.

ALL THE ANGELS PROSTRATE BEFORE SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام, BUT IBLĪS REFUSES TO DO SO.

After Allāh created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, He commanded the angels to prostrate before Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. Allāh says in Surahs Hijr [*verse* 29] and Sād [*verse* 72] that He commanded the angels saying, *"So when I have fashioned him and blown My spirit into him, (and commanded the angels) then fall in prostration to him."*

However, after Sayyidina Aadam's عليه السلام superiority over the angels was established, Allāh reiterated the command saying, *"Prostrate to Ādam!"* Consequently, *"they all prostrated, except Iblīs."*

THE RULING RELATING TO PROSTRATING BEFORE A PERSON TO HONOUR HIM.

Every Muslim knows that the angel's prostrating for Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was not a prostration made with the intention of worship, because this type of prostration is reserved exclusively for Allāh. However, the commentators differ about the type of prostration that the angels were commanded to make for Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام.

Some commentators say that the prostration was made for Allāh, but Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was used as the focal point (*Qibla*), whereby his status was also highlighted. This is just like how the status of the Ka'ba is highlighted by the fact that it is the Qibla for worshippers.

Other commentators say that the prostration was made for Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام but only to honour him, not with the intention of worshipping him. The example of this is the prostration that the family of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام made before him. [*Baydawi*]

Any prostration (*sajdah*) made for a being besides Allāh is prohibited *(harām)* in the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. While the prostration *(sajdah)* made for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام may have been permissible in his Shari'ah, it is not applicable to ours.

Sayyidina Qais bin Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates that he saw the people of Hīra prostrating before their leaders. He thought that it is worthier to prostrate before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم than those leaders. Therefore, when he appeared

before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم he recounted what he had seen and requested permission to prostrate before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him, "Will you prostrate before my grave as well?" When the Sayyidina Qais رضى الله عنه replied in the negative, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Then do not prostrate before me now. If I had to order anyone to prostrate before another person. I would have ordered women to prostrate before their husbands because of the right that Allāh has accorded men over women" [*Abu Dawūd, v.1, p.291*]

This hadith makes it clear that prostration *(sajdah)* cannot be made before any person or grave. Various other Ahādīth have also forbidden making prostration *(sajdah)* before anyone besides Allāh.

Some scholars *(Ulama)* have deduced the prohibition of prostration *(sajdah)* made out of respect from a verse in Surah Jinn, where Allāh says, *"Indeed the mosques (masājid) [i.e. all prostration (sajdah,)] are for Allāh, so do not call to anyone with him. "* [*verse 18*]

THE INSOLENCE OF IBLĪS.

Allāh says in Surah Hijr [*verses 30 to 32*]. *"Every one of the angels prostrated, except Iblīs. He refused to be amongst the prostrating ones. Allāh said, "Oh Iblīs! What prevents you that you are not of the prostrated ones?"*

Verse 12 of Surah A'rāf states, "(*Allāh*) said, *'What hindered you that you could not prostrate when I commanded you?' He replied, 'I am better than him! You have created me from fire and created him from clay."*

He objected that it was not logical for a creation of a superior origin (like fire) to prostrate to one of a lowly origin (*clay*). His proof of superiority was erroneous because the nature of fire is destructive, while the nature of soil is constructive, since it permits construction of buildings and the origin of foods. Soil is therefore superior to fire in many ways.

In any event, the duty of a Believer *(Mu'min)* is to carry out Allāh's command even if it does not seem logical to him. Instead, Iblīs chose to be arrogant. Therefore, Allāh says in the applicable verse of Surah Al-Baqarah, *"He refused and, was arrogant And he was from amongst the disbelievers."* Certain commentators interpret the verse to mean that he then became one of the disbelievers.

When Iblīs adopted this attitude, Allāh cursed him, meaning that He dispelled him from His mercy. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf [*verse 13*], "(Allāh) said, *"Go down from here! It ill behoves you that you should be arrogant here! Be gone, for you are surely of the disgraced ones!"*

Allāh says in another verse that He told Iblīs, *"Get out hence, for you are certainly accursed. Verily My curse shall be upon you till the Day of Judgment"* [*Surah Sād, verses 77/8*]

A person whom Allāh has cursed till Resurrection day *(Qiyamah)* can never expect His mercy. Therefore, Allāh says in Surah Sād [*verse 85*], *"I shall fill Hell with you Iblīs and with all those who follow you."*

Due to his pride, Iblīs chose to be accursed till the day of resurrection *(Qiyamah)* instead of prostrating to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. This is the danger of pride. It will cause devastation for a person in both worlds.

Some people have asked why Iblīs (who is a jinn) was accursed when the command to prostrate was only issued to the angels? This question is itself erroneous because verse 12 of Surah A'rāf is clear when it quotes Allāh as saying, *"What hindered you that you could not prostrate when I commanded you?"* This verse makes it clear that Iblīs also received the command to prostrate. However, only Allāh really knows whether the command was directly issued to him, or whether he was included amongst the angels because he was constantly with them.

What the Qur'ān does inform us is that Iblīs lived in the heavens and was banished there from. Durrul Manthūr *(v.1. p.50)* reports narrations from certain Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم and Successor of the Companions *(Tābi'īn)* رحمة الله عليهم wherein it is related exactly what Iblīs used to do in the heavens. However, these narrations seem to source from the Bani Isrā'īl and can therefore not be authenticated.

THE ENMITY THAT IBLĪS BEARS FOR THE PROGENY OF SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام

Allāh says in verse 117 of Surah TāHā, So We said, *'Oh Ādam! Indeed he is an enemy to you and your wife, so he should never remove the two of you from Heaven (Jannah), causing you to be unfortunate."*

Verse 62 of Surah Bani Isrā'īl quotes Iblīs as telling Allāh, *'If You grant me respite till the Day of resurrection (Qiyamah), I will surely gain control of his [Sayyidina Ādam's عليه السلام] progeny save a few individuals."*

The details of this discussion will, Insha Allāh, be completed in the commentary of the second bowing (*ruku*) of Surah A'rāf. Iblīs's original name was Azāzīl. After being cursed, he was called 'Iblīs' or 'Devil *(Shaytān)*.' meaning 'an extremely evil being.' He is the worst devil, and all his progeny are also called Devil *(Shaytān)* (the plural of which is 'Devils *(Shayātīn)*').

Since there are many humans who perpetrate acts similar to those performed by these Devils *(Shayātīn)*, it is commonly said that there are Devils *(Shayātīn)* from amongst man and from amongst the jinn.

وَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(35) We said, "Oh Aadam! You and your wife should live in Heaven (Jannah) and eat in abundance there from, from wherever you two desire. However, do not approach this tree, otherwise the two of you will become of the oppressors."

SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام AND HIS WIFE ARE COMMANDED TO LIVE IN HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*, BUT TO STAY AWAY FROM A CERTAIN TREE.

Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and his wife, Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام were commanded to live in Heaven *(Jannah)* and to eat freely as they pleased. However, they were specifically forbidden from a certain tree and were explicitly told not even to approach it.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has not specified exactly which tree the couple was forbidden to approach. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and others say that it was the wheat plant. Another Opinion is Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Masūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه have mentioned that it was the grape vine, while Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it was the fig tree. Others have also stated that it was the date palm [*Durrul Manthūr, v.1, p.52/3*]

We therefore cannot be certain as to which tree was meant. Nevertheless, it is also not necessary that we know this because no religious law is derived from it.

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

(36) So Devil (Shaytān) caused the two of them to slip into error by means of the tree, thereby removing them from whence they were. We said, "Go down as enemies to each other. On earth there shall be sanctuary for you and a place of benefit for a while.

DEVIL *(SHAYTĀN)* TRICKS SAYYIDINA ĀDAM AND HAWWA عليها السلام, THEREBY REMOVING THEM FROM HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*

Allāh warned Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام to beware of Devil *(Shaytān)*, his arch enemy, who was bent on causing harm to Sayyidina Aadam عليه السلام, his wife, and their progeny. Devil *(Shaytān)* was forever lying in ambush to remove Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام from Heaven *(Jannah)*, thereby depriving him of the bounties of Heaven *(Jannah)*. He knew that he would attain this goal if he could somehow beguile Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام to eat from the forbidden tree.

He therefore told Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام that he was prevented from eating from that tree because it would grant him an eternal existence in Heaven *(Jannah)* as an angel.

Recounting the speech of Devil *(Shaytān)*, Allāh says in Surah A'rāf [*verse 20*], *"Your Lord has prohibited you from this tree so that you do not become two angels and so that the two of you do not become of the immortal"*

Surah Tāhā [*verse 120*] states that Devil *(Shaytān)* said, *"Oh Ādam! Should I not show you the tree- of eternity and a kingdom wherein there is no weakness?"*

He did not merely speak to them casually, but swore on oath. Allāh says in

Surah A'rāf, *"He took an oath before them saying, 'Most assuredly I am definitely an advisor to you!"* [*verse* 21] *Eventually. "So doing, he manipulated them with deceit. "* [*Surah A'rāf, verse* 22]

Thereafter, *"When they tasted from the tree, their private parts became exposed* (when the clothes of Heaven *(Jannah) were removed from their bodies) and they began gathering the leaves of Heaven (Jannah) upon themselves. Their Lord called them, 'Did I not forbid you from that tree and warned you that Devil (Shaytān) is your open enemy? They both submitted. 'Oh our Lord, we have oppressed our souls and if You do not forgive us and show mercy to us we will surely be of the losers."* [*Surah A'rāf, verses* 22 *and* 23]

Eventually, he succeeded in tricking them into eating from the tree. As a result, they were sent to earth, which was actually predestined for them in which Allāh initially intended to place a viceroy.

After they ate from the tree, Allāh told them, *"Go down* (to the earth) *as enemies to each other. On earth there shall be sanctuary for you and a place of benefit for a while."* This verse could mean that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and his progeny are destined to live on earth till Resurrection day *(Qiyamah)*, the time of which is ordained. It could also mean that every person will live for a fixed time till ones death.

The command to go down to earth is mentioned as a plural (in Arabic grammar, only a number more than two is regarded as a plural -not two), whereas there were only two persons involved. Commentators have mentioned that Devil *(Shaytān)* was also instructed to go down to earth in this verse, due to which the plural is used. Other commentators say that the instruction actually applied to all the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, which the couple were to reproduce. This interpretation is most viable because Surah TāHā mentions the instruction using a verb denoting two persons. Allāh says in verse 123 of Surah TāHā, *"The two of you should go down from here and you people will be enemies to each other"*

Iblīs was already given the command to leave Heaven *(Jannah)* earlier. The phrase *"enemies to each other"* could either mean that mankind will be enemies to each other, or that Devil *(Shaytān)* will be their constant enemy.

فَتَلَقَّىٰٓ ءَادَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ كَلِمَٰتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾

(37) So Aadam received a few words from his Lord and Allāh pardoned him. Without doubt, He is the Most Pardoning, the Most Merciful.

SAYYIDINA ĀDAM'S عليها السلام REPENTANCE IS ACCEPTED.

Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwa عليه السلام were extremely remorseful about their error and repented, using certain words that Allāh inspired them with. Commentators say that the words were:

> *'Oh our Lord, we have oppressed our souls and if You do not forgive us and show mercy to us, we will surely be of the*

losers." [*Surah A'rāf, verse 23*]

The above verse of Surah A'rāf clearly mentions that both, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Sayyidina Hawwa عليها السلام recited the above words.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Masūd رضى الله عنه reports that the words were:

> *"Oh Allāh! We express Your purity and praise You. Your name is most blessed and Your status is extremely exalted. There is none worthy of worship besides You. (I have oppressed myself so forgive me. Only You can forgive sins.")*

Allāh accepted Sayyidina Ādam's عليه السلام repentance because *"Without doubt, He is the Most Pardoning, the Most Merciful."* Allāh will forgive any sincere penitent person. Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"He is the One who accepts the repentance of His bondsman, Who forgives sins, and knows what you do."* [*verse 25*]

Although they were forgiven, they were not allowed to return to Heaven *(Jannah)* because they were destined to live in earth. Here on earth a large number of their progeny will earn their return to Heaven *(Jannah)*. If they were returned to Heaven *(Jannah)*, only they would have benefited from its bounties and mankind may have been deprived of them. Even if their progeny flourished in Heaven *(Jannah)*, they would not have appreciated the bounties of Heaven *(Jannah)* as they would after passing through this world. Bounties are best appreciated after one has endured difficulties in acquiring them.

قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

(38) We said, "Go down from here, one and all. If there ever comes to you any guidance from Me, then whomsoever will follow My guidance shall have no fear on them, neither shall they grieve." (39) Those who disbelieve and falsify shall be the dwellers of the Fire, wherein they will abide forever.

A REWARD FOR THOSE WHO ACCEPT THE GUIDANCE, AND DAMNATION TO HELL FOR THOSE WHO REJECT

The previous verses made mention of the command to descend to earth, where people are to be tested for a while. The above verse reiterates the command, but adds that Allāh will be sending the Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and divine scriptures for man's guidance. Those who will abide by the guidelines propagated by these sources of guidance will return peacefully to Heaven *(Jannah)* where they *"shall have no fear on them, neither shall they grieve."* [*verse 38 above*]

Allāh says in Surah TāHā [*verse 123*] *"If there should ever come to you guidance from Me, then whoever will follow My guidance shall never go*

astray, nor shall he be unfortunate."

On the other hand. *"Those who disbelieve and falsify shall be the dwellers of the Fire, wherein they will abide forever."*

IMPORTANT NOTES CONCERNING THE INCIDENT OF SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام AND HAWWA عليها السلام.

Since Allāh has created man to be His viceroy on earth, man must adhere strictly to Allāh's commands and make every attempt to ensure that these commands are enforced on earth. This proves the fact that only people who possess the ability to enforce Allāh's laws can be commissioned to posts of authority.

Therefore,. these posts cannot be granted to people who do not accept the Qur'ān or merely claim to do so. Many leaders of Muslim countries are not prepared to enforce the laws of the Shari'ah in their countries but rather adopt the laws and practices of the Infidels *(kuffār)*. They do this because the laws of the Shari'ah will certainly curb their freedom to satisfy their carnal passions. As a result of this failure to uphold the post of Allāh's viceroy, the world has become a chaotic mayhem of strife and anarchy.

Even the Muslim countries are fraught with murder and violence. Muslims should take the initiative to instate a true "viceroy of Allāh" as their leader, who can enforce Allāh's injunctions and not be from amongst those *"who sever those things that Allāh has commanded that they join."* [*Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 27*]

The ignorance and insubordinate nature of man is evident from the fact that although he was created to be Allāh's viceroy on earth, yet the majority of mankind are infidels *(kuffār)*, while many of those who claim to be believers *(Mu'minīn)* are grossly disobedient. It is tragic that the being for whom Allāh commanded the angels to prostrate, should be cast in disgrace into the pit of Hell due to disbelief *(Kufr)*.

Even people who claim to be Believers (*Mu'minīn*) elect irreligious and heretic leaders who lead them to commit all sorts of sins and vices. Murder, usury, bribery, consuming liquor, gambling and all other sins are perpetrated openly in these *"Muslim"* countries. People do not pay their Zakāh, do not perform their Salāh and even eat publicly during the month of Ramadhān. All this takes place because people have forgotten their status as Allāh's viceroys.

It may occur to one that the angels were then accurate when they said that man will cause anarchy and blood shed on earth. However, their error was that they generalised this to be the condition of all mankind, whereas there are so many people who are not like this at all. They never considered the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام, the martyrs, pious scholars, mujāhidīn and a host of other sincere believers (*Mu'minīn*).

Paging through the history of the *'Ummah'* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم indicates to us the millions of people who were the epitome of piety and excellence.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the angels of the day

and the night alternate each day. They all gather during the time of the *Fajr* and *Asr* Salāhs. When the angels who were with man during the night ascend to Allāh, He asks them (despite possessing more knowledge there of) in what condition had they left His slaves? They reply that they left them while they were performing Salāh and they found them the day before while performing Salāh. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.457*]

A hadith in Mishkāt *(p. 229)* informs us that Allāh boasts about mankind before the angels when they all supplicate to Allāh on the plains of Arafāt on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah. The same occurs every Eid after the Eid Salāh. [*Mishkāt, p,. 182*]

KNOWLEDGE IS AN EXCEPTIONALLY GREAT WEALTH.

The excellence of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام over the angels was established because of his superior knowledge. Knowledge is always better than ignorance on condition that the knowledge spurs one to obey and recognise Allāh, and assists him in the task of being a viceroy. The knowledge that Allāh granted Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was necessary to fulfill his task as Allāh's viceroy.

That knowledge which prompts one to debate against the truth and which takes one away from Allāh is actually ignorance. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that some types of knowledge are ignorance. [*Abu Dawūd*]

The knowledge of Qur'ān and Ahādīth most certainly leads one to Allāh. Of course, there are other sciences that also serve the same purpose. Allāh says in a verse, *"And in your own selves, do you not see?'* Allāh says in another verse, *"We will soon show them Our portents in the horizons and in themselves"* Whereas man can attain closeness to Allāh by studying the sciences related to astronomy, biology and botany, people generally study them only to meet their material requirements. It is most tragic that many experts in these fields are irreligious, agnostic and hold heretical views instead of being rightly guided.

THE EXCELLENCE OF ONE WHO IS SUPERIOR IN KNOWLEDGE MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

Whenever a person learns that another's knowledge is superior to ones, then ones must acknowledge the fact and admit it without feeling disgraced. The angels did exactly this when they realised that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was more knowledgeable.

It is extremely foolish to claim to have knowledge and debate with intellectuals when one is ignorant about the matter being discussed. Even worst is to adamantly cling to falsehood after the truth has been established.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REPENTANCE (*TAUBA*)

It is the duty of a slave to repent immediately upon realising his sin. He should admit his error and sincerely implore Allāh for forgiveness. One should not repeat a sin and should regard the sin to be a weighty burden upon one's shoulders.

Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام forgot the prohibition of eating from the tree, as Allāh says in Surah Tāhā [*verse 115*], *"Undoubtedly We commanded Ādam before, but*

he forgot When he was reminded of his error, he did not make excuses, but admitted his folly. Whereas people are not reprimanded for lapses in memory, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was reminded of his folly because he failed to adopt the means of remembering. It should be noted that people of higher status are answerable for things which others of lesser standing will be excused. Therefore, while forgetfulness like this will be excusable for another human, it will not be tolerated from a Prophet عليه السلام of Allāh.

Allāh inspired Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Hawwa عليها السلام with the words necessary to secure forgiveness because they did not make any excuses, not even that of forgetfulness. On the contrary, Iblīs not only disobeyed Allāh's command but he also argued his cause without admitting his folly.

The pious bondsmen of Allāh not only admit their sin, but they also counteract it with good deeds, thinking that they have still not fulfilled Allāh's right. They then sincerely repent to Allāh.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Every child of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام is sinful, but the best of the sinful ones are those who repent." [*Mishkāt, p. 204*]

It is therefore imperative that the children of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام adopt the behaviour of their father, Sayyidina Aadam عليه السلام and not follow in the footsteps of their arch enemy Devil *(Shaytān)*.

PRIDE IS ONE OF THE WORST MALADIES.

It was pride that caused Iblīs to disobey Allāh's command, thereby leading to his banishment from Heaven *(Jannah)*. He chose to be cast out of Heaven *(Jannah)* rather than swallow his pride and prostrate to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. Instead of repenting, he requested Allāh to lengthen his life so that he could devote his life to misleading mankind.

The Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم if that person was proud who likes that his clothes and shoes to be neat and smart. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Verily Allāh is beautiful and likes beauty (i.e. good clothing and shoes do not denote pride)." Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added that pride means to oppose the truth and to look down on others. [*Muslim, v.1, p.65*]

This malady is prevalent in all levels of society, and even the seemingly pious people have fallen prey to it. Pride is commonly displayed when people refuse to admit to their errors and argue that they are right. They may pass an incorrect ruling or spread wrong information, but will adamantly oppose anyone who corrects them.

Allāh loves humility in a person. Perfect Belief *(Imān)* will dictate to a person that he should show appreciation for all Allāh's bounties and behave humbly towards people.

Standing on the pulpit, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once said, "Oh people! Adopt humility, because I have heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say that Allāh elevates the rank of the person who humbles himself for Allāh. He will appear low in his own eyes, but high in the estimation of others. Allāh will

humiliate the person who is haughty. He will appear high in his own eyes, but will be more disgraced than a pig in the eyes of others." [*Mishkāt, p. 434*]

BOUNTIES ARE SNATCHED AWAY BECAUSE OF SINS.

Besides the accountability on the Day of Resurrection *(Qiyamah)*, sins cause one to lose whatever bounties one possesses in this very world. When Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Hawwa عليها السلام ate from the forbidden tree, they immediately lost the clothing of Heaven *(Jannah)* and were sent to the world, where they had to bear suffering and hardship.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that a person is deprived of sustenance because of the sins that he perpetrates. [*Mustadrak of Hākim, v.1, p.493*]

There are many people and nations who desire that they be relieved of their difficulties, but refuse to refrain from the sins that they are drowned in. In fact, they argue with those who wish to advise them. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf [verse 96], *"If only the inhabitants of the towns believe and adopt abstinence, We would open to them multitudes of blessings from the heavens and the earth. However they denied, so We apprehended them on account of what they earned."*

Many Ahādīth mention the evil repercussions of sins in this world. Sayyidina Amr bin Ās رضى الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "The nation wherein fornication is prevalent will be afflicted by droughts, and the nation amongst whom bribery is common will suffer excessive fear.' [*Mishkāt, p. 313*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the enforcement of a single penal law is better than forty days of continuous rain. [*Ibn Majah, p. 182*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that Allāh's mercy does not come to the person who severs family ties. [*Mishkāt; p. 420*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said that Allāh will forgive all sins besides that of harming one's parents. Allāh will punish the person who does this before his death. [*Mishkāt, p. 421*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will cast fear into the hearts of the nation amongst whom treachery is rife. Death will be common amongst those people who frequently commit adultery and sustenance will be straitened for those who cheat in weight and measure. Murder and bloodshed will be rife amongst those people who are unjust in their legal Judgment, and enemies will overpower those people who break their promises. [*Mu'atta of Mālik*]

MODESTY IS A NATURAL TRAIT OF A HUMAN.

This fact is displayed in the way that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Hawwa عليها السلام immediately began to cover their private parts with leaves when their clothes were removed. They did this even though the two of them were alone.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that the following four factors were common amongst all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام: (1) Modesty, (2)

applying perfume, (3) using the Miswāk, (4) marriage. [*Tirmidhi*]

In another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Belief *(Imān)* and modesty are linked so closely that the disappearance of one will necessitate the absence of the other. [*Mishkāt p. 432*]

THE REWARD FOR ACCEPTING ALLĀH'S GUIDANCE.

Allāh says after the incident of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, *"If there ever comes to you any guidance from Me, then whomsoever will follow My guidance shall have no fear on them, neither shall they grieve."*

Allāh has not merely sent man in this world to eat, drink and reproduce. Allāh subjects man to numerous trials in this world to test his worth and has ordained certain injunctions which he has to fulfill. If man will abide by the teachings of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures, Allāh will allow him to return to the place whence his parents, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Hawwa عليها السلام left. Just as Disbelievers *(kuffār)* do not inherit from Muslims, the Disbelievers *(kuffār)* progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Hawwa عليها السلام will not inherit the bliss of Heaven *(Jannah)* from their Muslim parents.

Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and all the Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام after him preached Islām, which has the following three basic tenets:

1. Belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* i.e. in the Being and attributes of Allāh as He has explained them via his messengers and books. **2.** Belief in Risāla (*prophethood*), which includes belief in all Allāh's Prophets *(Anbiyā)* and whateve they preached i.e. belief in the angels, predestination, Heaven *(Jannah)*, Hell, and all the other laws propagated by the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام.

3. Belief in resurrection after death, when people will receive the rewards or punishment for what they did in the world.

All the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام preached the above tenets, although the specific Dīn (*religions*) may have differed as far as the injunctions are concerne It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I am the close person to Isa, the son of Maryam in this world and in the Hereafter. All t Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام are step brothers with different mothers, having t same Dīn *(Religion)*. [*Bukhari v.1, p.490*]

People are grossly incorrect to say that Islām is only one and a half centur old. Islām has been propagated from the time of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, a has been preached by every one of the Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام.

While all the previous Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام have passed away fro this world, the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is perpetuated by t Qur'ān because he was sent as a Prophet to the entire universe till doomsd *(Qiyamah)*. Every person, be he a Jew, Christian, Buddhist or Hindu, is part of Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Ummah, and needs to accept his message.

Allāh says in verse 85 of Surah Āl Imrān, *'Whosoever seeks a Dīn (Religi besides Islām, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be, in the Herea amongst the losers."*

Allāh says to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Surah Saba [*verse 28*], *"We have sent you as a messenger, bearer of glad tidings, and a warner to the whole of mankind. However, most people do not know."*

Muslim (v.1, p.86) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I swear by the Being in Whose control lies my life! Whichever person of this ummah, be he a Jew or a Christian, who dies without believing in me after hearing about me, will be from the dwellers of the Blazing Fire."

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL.

Since the forthcoming verses and many other Surahs of the Qur'ān discuss the Bani Isrā'īl, it is appropriate that a person becomes acquainted with their background so that one may understand the Qur'ān better.

THE HOMELAND AND CHILDREN OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام hailed from Babylon where Nimrūd (*Nimrūz*) reigned. The people of the place including Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام father were all idolators. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام preached oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to them but instead of listening to him, they were bitterly opposed to him and even cast him into a raging fire.

One of his wives was Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام who happened to be the daughter of his paternal uncle. His other wife was Sayyidah Hājra عليها السلام. Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام was born from Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام while Sayyidah Hājra عليها السلام bore Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. Sayyidah Hājra عليها السلام and Ismā'īl عليه السلام were the two whom Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام left alone in the desert of Makkah and became the founders of this great city. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also had other children whose names have been recorded in the book, "Al Bidaya wan Nihayah"

Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام had a son called Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام who was also known as Isrā'īl (meaning 'the chosen servant of Allāh' or 'Allāh's slave'). His progeny is therefore referred to as the Bani Isrā'īl (the children of Isrā'īl). Sayyidina Ya'qub's عليه السلام son was Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام whose story is discussed in Surah Yusuf.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL ARRIVE IN EGYPT.

When Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام ruled Egypt, his eleven brothers also migrated to Egypt where their progeny flourished till their twelve tribes numbered 60 000 in total. Their homeland was Kan'ān in Palestine which was the place to which Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام migrated after leaving Babylon.

While the progeny of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام abounded in Makkah, the progeny of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام prospered in Kan'ān and later in Egypt. After the demise of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, the Bani Isrā'īl were greatly oppressed in Egypt because they were aliens in the country.

The Copts of Egypt made the Bani Isrā'īl their slaves and they even slaughtered the sons of the Bani Isrā'īl.

THE RISĀLAT (*PROPHETHOOD*) OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام, AND HIS PREACHING.

Allāh made Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام a Prophet from amongst the Bani Isrā'īl who preached to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and requested that he free the Bani Isrā'īl from bondage. However, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* neither accepted Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام preaching, nor did he release the Bani Isrā'īl. Instead, he claimed divinity.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL ESCAPE FROM EGYPT.

By Allāh's command, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام eventually led the Bani Isrā'īl out of Egypt one night. When Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* army caught up with them, they were at the seashore. Allāh then commanded Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to strike the water with his staff, causing the sea to make way for twelve dry roads. The Bani Isrā'īl were then able to cross safely.

When Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*and his army decided to pursue them, Allāh caused the sea to close on them, drowning them all. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was also killed, but Allāh preserved his body, which is still present today in a museum in Egypt. Addressing him, Allāh says in verse 92 of Surah Yunus, *"Today We shall preserve you with your body to be sign for those after you.*

Al Bidaya wan Nihayah (*v.1, p.270*) reports that when they crossed the sea, the Bani Isrā'īl numbered 600,000 excluding women and children. By then they had already lived in Egypt for 426 solar years.

AFTER EMERGING FROM EGYPT, THEY REACH THEIR HOMELAND AFTER FORTY YEARS.

Although their original homeland was far off, the Bani Isrā'īl could have reached it in a reasonable amount of time. However, the journey took forty years because they wandered about lost in the valley of Tīh. Every night, they arrived at the same place from where they had departed in the morning.

During that period, they harassed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام greatly and even started worshipping the calf when he went to Mount Tūr to receive the Torah. When he returned, they refused to believe him until they personally heard Allāh speaking and saw Him with their own eyes.

Allāh provided *manna* and *salwa* for them from Heaven *(Jannah)* but they expressed ingratitude by requesting for the common vegetables of the world. When they refused to practise the injunctions of the Torah, Allāh suspended Mount Tūr over their heads, threatening to drop it on them if they remained stubborn.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام passed away during these forty years, whereafter Sayyidina Yusha bin Nūn عليه السلام was their Prophet and eventually led them to Baitul Muqaddas. The various incidents mentioned above have all been discussed in the verses of the Qur'ān.

THE JEWS ARRIVE IN MADINAH.

Historians write that when the Disbeliever *(kāfir)* tyrant Bukht Nasr attacked Baitul Muqaddas, he banished the Jews from there. Many immigrated to Hijāz,

Wadi Qura, Tayma and Madinah. At that time, there were some people of the Bani Jurhum residing there, along with some descendants of the Amāliqa tribe who planted and harvested dates.

The Jews gradually grew in number until they outnumbered the others. They expelled the others from Madinah, thereby seizing possession of the city. They resided there for as long as Allāh willed. [*Futuhul Buldān, p.329*]

Certain historians have mentioned that the Jews had read in the Torah that the final messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم will appear in a city where dates flourish and which is bordered by two rocky deserts. Therefore, they set out from Baitul Muqaddas to search for this place so that they could receive him and follow him. When they recognised Madinah to be the place, they settled there. [*Umdatu Akhbār Fi Madinahtil Mukhtār p. 34, and Mu'jamul Buldān, v.5, p.82*]

THE AWS AND KHAZRAJ TRIBES ARRIVE IN MADINAH.

The original name of Madinah was Yathrib. After the Hijrah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed the name to Madinahtur Rasūl, Tayyibah and Tābah. It is now famously called Madinah or Madinahtul Munawwarah.

After the Jews had been living in Madinah for a long while, two tribes from Yemen settled there. These were the Aws and the Khazraj. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, the following tribes lived there:

The Jews, viz. (1) The Bani Nadīr, (2) the Bani Quraizah and (3) the Bani Qaynuqa.

The Yemenis, viz, the Aws and the Khazraj who were later known as the Ansār.

The two Yemeni tribes were idol worshippers and were constantly fighting each other and the Jews. The Jews were regarded as the People of the Book and they used to tell the others that they are awaiting the advent of the final Prophet, whom they would follow and then crush their enemies.

THE AWS AND KHAZRAJ ACCEPT ISLĀM.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم met the first group of pilgrims from amongst the Aws and Khazraj, he invited them to Islām. They realised that he was the same person about whom the Jews boasted that they would follow him to vanquish their enemies. Therefore, before the Jews could follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they decided to accept Islām.

When they returned to Madinah, they propagated the message of Islām. Twelve representatives from amongst them met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the following year to pledge their allegiance to him. They also invited the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to migrate to Madinah.

THE MIGRATION (*HIJRAH*) TO MADINAH.

After receiving the invitation, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه for Madinah. The books of history mention the incidents of the various Companions (*Sahābah*) رضى الله عنهم who had already left

for Madinah before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. One may refer to these in *'Futuhul Buldān (p. 30), "Ar Rawdul Unf" (v.2, p.16)* and the "Sīrah" of *'Ibn Hishām'*.

THE OBSTINACY OF THE JEWS.

Despite possessing the knowledge that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the true Prophet of Allāh about whom they had read in their scriptures, the Jews refused to accept him as such. They even refused to respond to the words of the Aws and the Khazraj when these two tribes reminded them that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the very same Prophet about whom they (the Jews) had threatened others. [*Ibn Hishām*]

Because of their jealousy and enmity, the Jews did not respond to the Holy Prophet 's صلى الله عليه وسلم preaching. Only a few of them accepted Islām, while the others always plotted against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims.

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتِيَ ٱلَّتِيٓ أَنۡعَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَأَوۡفُواْ بِعَهۡدِيٓ أُوفِ بِعَهۡدِكُمۡ وَإِيَّٰيَ فَٱرۡهَبُونِ ﴿40﴾

(40) Oh Bani Isrā'īl! Call to mind Allāh's favour which He conferred upon you. Fulfil My pledge and I will fulfil yours. Fear Me only."

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL ARE REMINDED OF ALLĀH'S FAVOURS ON THEM.

In addressing the Bani Isrā'īl, Allāh addresses the Jews, since they were the progeny of Sayyidina Isrā'īl (*Ya'qub*) عليه السلام. During the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they lived in Madinah, Khaibar and Shām. After arriving in Madinah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم encountered the Jews who were not to be found in Makkah. Therefore the Qur'ān begins to address them.

Allāh says in the above verse, "*Oh Bani Isrā'īl! Call to mind Allāh's favour, which He conferred upon you Fulfil My pledge and I will fulfil yours. Fear Me only*". The Bani Isrā'īl knew what bounties Allāh had conferred on them and their forefathers. The verses wherein Allāh speaks about these favours prove that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is Allāh's Prophet because he could not have learnt these from any person, nor read it because he was unlettered. He could have learnt about this only from Allāh.

وَءَامِنُواْ بِمَآ أَنزَلۡتُ مُصَدِّقٗا لِّمَا مَعَكُمۡ وَلَا تَكُونُوٓاْ أَوَّلَ كَافِرِۭ بِهِۦۖ وَلَا تَشۡتَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِي ثَمَنٗا قَلِيلٗا وَإِيَّٰيَ فَٱتَّقُونِ ﴿41﴾

(41) Believe in what I have revealed in confirmation of what you have with you, and do not become the first disbelievers. Do not barter Allāh's verses for a measly price. Fear Me only.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL ARE INVITED TO ACCEPT ISLĀM.

Allāh addresses the Jews further by saying, "*Believe in what I have revealed*

(i.e. the Qur'an) *in confirmation of what you have with you* (i.e. the Torah)" Although the Torah and Injīl that the Jews and Christians possessed during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were already adulterated, they still contained some true descriptions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says in Surah Arāf [*verse 157*]. *"Those who follow the unlettered messenger and Prophet that they find written* (mentioned) *with them in the Torah and Injīl."*

Since the Jews had knowledge of the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to be the final Prophet on earth, and they had waited for him in Madinah for such a long time, it was necessary that they be the first to believe in him. The Christians learnt about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم much later, while the Polytheists of Makkah were totally unaware of his imminent appearance.

The Jews were therefore the best equipped with knowledge to realise that they had no reason to reject the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is for this reason that Allāh admonishes them, *"and do not become the first disbelievers."*

Since the Jews were the first to learn about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in their scriptures, they were actually the first to receive the message to follow him. Therefore, their rejection will be regarded as the first disbelief even before the disbelief of the Polytheists in Makkah. Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the Jews should not become the first disbelievers from amongst the Ahlul Kitāb (including Jews and Christians) of Madinah.

'Do not barter Allāh 's verses for a measly price." Certain commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that they should believe in Allāh's verses and all His messengers عليهم السلام [including the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] They must not refrain from accepting Islām merely for fear of losing some material wealth. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that they should not adulterate their scriptures and should not conceal the truth. They used to do this often when others bribed them to do so. [*Baydawi*]

"Fear Me only." Fear of Allāh is the most effective means whereby people can refrain from sin. The command to fear Allāh is repeated in this verse due to its importance.

Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes that the first verse (*40*) addresses the general public to adopt the means to Piety *(taqwa)* (Allāh's fear), whereas the second (41) applies specifically to the learned scholars because they are required to reach the pinnacles of piety *(taqwa)* (which is denoted by the word "Fattaqūn".

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿42﴾

(42) Do not confuse the truth with falsehood and knowingly conceal the truth.

THE TRUTH MUST NOT BE CONCEALED AND MIXED WITH FALSEHOOD

This verse addresses the Jewish scholars, telling them not to confuse the

truth with falsehood by inserting their own additions to the divine scriptures. It was their practice not to teach the Torah to the masses, and they preserved the Torah in scattered leaves, making reference difficult.

Whenever anyone would seek a ruling from them, they would extract any leaf and tell the person exactly what he wanted to hear, provided the person paid for it. It was also their practice to conceal the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from the masses. It is for these reasons that Allāh cautions them, *"Do not confuse the truth with falsehood and knowingly conceal the truth."*

They perpetrated these acts even though they realized that they were sinning.

(43) Establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and bow (in ruku) with those who bow.

THE COMMAND TO PERFORM SALĀH AND PAY ZAKĀH

The meaning of establishing Salāh has already been discussed earlier in Surah Al-Baqarah. Many verses mention Salāh and Zakāh together, since they denote physical and financial acts of devotion. Salāh inspires a person to turn to Allāh and instills humility into him. Zakāh eradicates miserliness and other evils associated with wealth. There are numerous other benefits attached to these two acts of worship which the Scholars (*Ulama*) have elucidated in many books.

Allāh also commands the Bani Isrā'īl to *'bow (in ruku).) with those who bow."* This means that they should be particular about performing Salāh in congregation. One of the greatest virtues of Salāh in congregation is that the reward for such a Salāh is multiplied 27 times.

Although Salāh and Zakāh are obligatory for all Muslims, the Jews are specifically commanded with these because these two acts of devotion are especially effective in eradicating the maladies of love of position and love of wealth, both of which were widespread amongst the Jews.

Other commentators have mentioned that the prayer of the Jews did not include the bowing *(ruku)* posture. Allāh therefore impresses upon them to adopt the prayer of the muslims, meaning that they should become muslims.

Scholars (*Ulama*) have deduced from this verse that it is Wājib (*Compulsory*) to perform Salāh in congregation. Even those who say that it is sunnah deeds practice by Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have emphasised its importance.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'I swear by the Being in whose control is my life! I desire to instruct that firewood be gathered. Thereafter, I would instruct that the call or prayer (*adhān*) be given so that that Salāh may commence. I will then appoint an Imām to lead the Salāh and personally set fire to the homes of those who do not attend the Salāh in congregation.' [*Bukhari, v.1, p.89*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in another hadith. "If there were no

women and children at home, I would lead the Isha Salāh and order the youth to set fire to the homes of those who do not attend the Salāh with congregation.' [*Mishkāt, p. 97*]

Once after completing the Fajr Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم inquired from the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم whether a certain person was present. When the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنه replied in the negative, he asked about a second person. When it was mentioned that he too was absent, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the Fajr and Isha Salāhs are most difficult for the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. He then added, "If you knew the reward for these two Salāhs, you would come to the Mosque (*Masjid*) even if you had to crawl. Indeed, the first row is the row of the angels. If you knew the reward of standing in this row, you would race to stand in it. Undoubtedly, the Salāh of two persons performing Salāh together is better than performing individually Performing Salāh collectively with two persons is better than performing Salāh collectively with just one person. Allāh likes the congregation of more people proportionately more." [*Mishkāt p.96*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه said, "I have certainly witnessed the time when only the open hypocrite would miss Salāh in congregation or an ill person. Even the ill would present themselves with the aid of two persons. Indeed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has shown us many ways of guidance and amongst these is to perform Salāh in a Mosque *(Masjid)* where the adhān is given." [*Muslim, v.1, p.232*]

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, Satan *(Shaytān)* will certainly assume control of any three men in a forest or town where they do not perform Salāh in congregation. So be particular about performing Salāh in congregation because a wolf devours the lone sheep." [*Mishkāt p. 96*]

أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

(44) Do you command people with good, forgetting yourselves, whereas you recite the Book? Have you no understanding?

A PREACHER MUST NOT FORGET HIMSELF.

The Jewish scholars realised that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the true Prophet of Allāh. Therefore, despite not accepting Islām themselves, they sometimes advised their friends or family to accept Islām.

"Ibn Kathīr" and "Durrul Manthūr" report from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once visited an ailing jewish youngster who used to be in his attendance. The boy was about to leave this world. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood at the boy's head side and encouraged him to accept Islām The boy looked towards his father, who told him, "Obey Abul Qāsim (i.e. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم)]. The boy then accepted Islām. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left the house saying, 'All praise be to Allāh, Who saved him from Hell." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.181*]

Besides this incident, there were other occasions when the Jews advised others to perform Salāh and pay Zakāh, without doing it themselves. It is for this reason that Allāh asks them, *"Do you command people with good, forgetting yourselves, whereas you recite the Book? Have you no understanding?'*

Although the verse addressed the Jews, it may apply to any person who preaches something to people, while he does not practise it himself. This type of behaviour is extremely detrimental.

It has been reported in certain narrations that the example of the learned scholar who preaches to others without practising himself, is like the lamp that gives light to others while burning itself out.

THE PUNISHMENT FOR NON-PRACTISING LECTURERS

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when he was taken on a tour of the heavens, he saw people whose lips were being cut with scissors. When the lips were completely cut, they were restored to their normal form, whereafter they were cut again. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Jibrīl عليه السلام about the identity of these people, he replied, "These are the lecturers of your ummah who instructed people with good, but forgot themselves, whereas they recited the Book. Have they no understanding?" [*Durrul Manthūr, vo.1, p.64, and Mishkāt, p. 438*]

Sayyidina Usāma bin Zaid رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a person will be cast into Hell where his innards will emerge from his body. He will go around Hell with his entrails hanging out, just like a donkey walks about a grinding mill. The people of Hell will gather around him asking, "What had happened to you? Did you not enjoin us to do good and forbid us from evil?" He will reply, "I enjoined you to do good without doing it myself, and I forbade you from evil whereas I perpetrated them myself" [Muslim, v.2, p.412]

Note: The above verse denotes that a person should enjoin good and forbid evil *(Amr bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar)*, together with making an effort to practise on whatever one is preaching. It does not mean that one should discard enjoining good and forbidding evil if one is not practising on the good and refraining from the evil. This should be understood well.

وَٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ (45) ٱلَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ (46)

(45) Seek assistance with patience and Salāh. Without doubt, this is difficult, except for the humble ones; (46) Those who are convinced that they will meet their Lord, and that they will return to Him.

SEEKING ASSISTANCE BY MEANS OF PATIENCE AND SALĀH.

The Arabic word *"sabr"* (*translated above as "patience")* has the following three meanings:

1. *Being steadfast on the performance of deeds, especially the Farā'idh and Wājibāt.*

2. *Completely abstaining from sin.*

3. *Being patient when afflicted by adversities.*

People are generally only conversant with the third meaning. All these forms of patience *(sabr)* draw Allāh's assistance. The carnal soul is generally not prepared to carry out the devotions prescribed by the Islamic Laws (*Shari'ah).* Therefore, a *person* has to exercise patience *(sabr)* by proceeding with the act. Then too, the carnal self will not want to perform the act properly. Again patience (*sabr*) will be required to ensure that the act is done properly.

Acts like fasting and jihād *(religious war)* require an excessive amount of *'sabr.'* Salāh is the greatest form of physical worship which also demands a high level of patience (*sabr*) This is so because Salāh actively involves both the outward and the inward dispositions of a person, which is difficult for the carnal self.

Sayyidina Hudhaifa رضى الله عنه reports that he returned to the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم after completing a responsibility during the battle of Ahzāb. He says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was then engaged in Salāh because he always resorted to Salāh when faced with any adversities.

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم engaged in Salāh on the eve of the battle of Badr while everyone else was sound asleep. He supplicated to Allāh the entire night till dawn. [*Ibn Kathīr. v.1, p.87*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports from Ibn Jarīr that the verse *"Seek assistance with patience and Salāh"* is addressed to the learned scholars of the Jews. They are encouraged to seek assistance from Allāh so that they can forsake their passion for wealth and honour, submit to Allāh and accept Islām. They should then exercise patience if they have to lose any part of their material possessions in the process.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه also mentions that the command to seek assistance with patience *(sabr)* and Salāh applies to all people, even though the Jews have been addressed in the verse. [*v.1, p.88*]

THE IMPORTANCE OF SALĀH

Salāh involves the internal and external body. The external body must be pure and well covered, acts which require money to be spent. This lends a financial aspect to Salāh, making it a form of financial act of devotion as well. Salāh entails devoting one's attention to the act, while fighting off the attacks of Devil*(Shaytān).* The person performing Salāh enters into direct conversation with Allāh while reciting the Qur'ān and attesting to Allāh's Oneness.

In Salāh, a person is constantly fighting his carnal desires by abstaining from eating, drinking, speaking and walking about. By being devoted to Salāh and paying heed to performing the Obligatory prayers *(Farāidh)*, Compulsory prayers (*Wājibāt*), *Sunan (Practice of Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *(Sunan)* (plural of Sunnah) add Supererogatory prayers (*Nawāfil*), one will attain Allāh's assistance

and draw His mercy.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMILITY

'Without doubt, this (Salāh), is difficult, except for the humble ones." Humility entails submitting the heart after which the other limbs will also be submissive. Those who perform their Salāh with this quality truly enjoy their Salāh and cannot bear to miss it. Those who attain this quality are truly successful.

Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"The believers have truly succeeded. (They are) Those who are humble in their Salāh."* [*verses I and 2*]

People exert themselves greatly in acquiring the things of this world. There are those who even work for 18 hours daily. However, they consider the performance of two rakāhs of Salāh to be too difficult. Even if they have to perform Salāh, their minds are so involved in their worldly activities that they cannot hope to attain humility.

WHO ARE THE HUMBLE ONES?

Allāh describes the humble as *"Those who are convinced that they will meet their Lord* (after death), *and that they will return* to *Him* [on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyamah)*]." The person who is convinced of the above will never miss any Salāh, never delay its performance and will perform it properly.

If Allāh accepts a person's Salāh, He will accept all their other deeds as well. However, if it is rejected, all the other deeds will also be rejected. If a person realises this, together with the conviction that he will be immensely rewarded and that it will guarantee his success in the Hereafter, then he will ensure that he performs it properly. Without this realisation, he will find two rakāhs of Salāh too difficult for him.

Sayyidina Ammār bin Yāsir رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that some people only receive a tenth, a nineth, an eighth, a seventh, a sixth, a fifth, a quarter, a third or a half of the reward for their Salāh. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb, v.2, p.341*]

This deficiency in reward is due to the lack of sincerity and humility in their Salāh.

يَـٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتِىَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّى فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِى نَفْسٌ عَن نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَـٰعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

(47) O children of Isrā'īl, call to mind My favour that I bestowed upon you and that I preferred you above the universe. (48) Fear the day when one soul will not avail another in the least, no intercession will be accepted, no ransom will taken, and they will not be helped.

THE SELFISHNESS OF PEOPLE ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYAMAH)*

Allāh reiterates the command to recall His favours on the Bani Isrā'īl. Allāh tells them, *"I had granted you preference above the universe."* Allāh accorded this virtue to the forefathers of the Bani Isrā'īl who were-the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام or other pious people who always adhered to the true Dīn *(Religion)* and worshipped Allāh only. Allāh had preferred them above all those existing in their respective eras.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is the best of all the Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليه السلام and his ummah followers is the best of all ummahs, as Allāh says *"You are the best of ummahs"* [*Surah Āl Imrān, verse 110*]. Allāh also says in verse 142 of Surah Al-Baqarah, *"Thus we have made you such a group that is moderate in nature"*

The Bani Isrā'īl were the best in their respective times because they followed the teachings of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام. However, they adulterated their scriptures and even rejected the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم despite being convinced of the fact that he was really Allāh's messenger. In doing so, they destroyed the credibility that Allāh granted them and earned Allāh's wrath.

The Jews were jealous of the fact that the final messenger should be from the Arabs and not from them. This, coupled with love for wealth and honour prevented them from accepting the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's Prophet. Allāh informs them in the Qur'ān that they should not pay so much attention to the things of this world because these will not help them on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyamah)*.

Allāh informs them, *"Fear the day when no soul will not avail another in the least no intercession will be accepted, no ransom will taken, and they will not be helped."*

ONLY THOSE WHOM ALLĀH PERMITS WILL BE ABLE TO INTERCEDE ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYAMAH)*

Intercession will only be accepted from those whom Allāh permits, and only on behalf of those whom Allāh permits. No intercession will be permitted on behalf of the Disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

Allāh says in Surah Muddaththir, *"The intercession of an intercessor will not profit them* (the Disbelievers)." [*verse 48*]

Allāh says in verse 109 of Surah TāHā, *"On that day intercession will only benefit those whom the Beneficent (Rahmān) permits and whose speech He is pleased with."*

Verse 255 of Surah Al-Baqarah reads, *"Who is there that can intercede by Him save with His permission?"*

None will be able to save another from Allāh's punishment on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyamah)* even if they possess all the material wealth of the universe.

Allāh says in verse 91 of Surah Āl Imrān, *"Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, the earth full of gold shall never be accepted from any of them if they ever*

wish to offer it as ransom. Theirs shall be a painful chastisement and they shall have no helpers."

Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah [*verse 36*], *"Indeed those who disbelieve, if they possessed all within the earth and the like thereof in addition to ransom themselves from the punishment of the Day of Judgment, it will not be accepted from them. Theirs shall be a painful punishment"*

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَٰكُم مِّنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوٓءَ ٱلْعَذَابِ يُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ
وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِى ذَٰلِكُم بَلَآءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿49﴾

(49) When We rescued you from the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun), who inflicted a terrible punishment upon you by slaughtering your sons and preserving the lives of your daughters. Therein was a great trial for you from your Lord.

THE OPPRESSION SUFFERED BY THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL IN EGYPT

In the above verse, Allāh makes mention of a great boon that He bestowed on the Bani Isrā'īl. They suffered great prejudice because of their foreign nationality and were treated worse than slaves. However, Allāh sent Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and his brother Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام as messengers to Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*). They preached to Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) and his people, and even won a contest against the great magicians of the time, who subsequently believed in Allāh.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام led the Bani Isrā'īl out of Egypt, they were pursued by Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) and his army. However, Allāh made Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) and his entire army drown in the sea, thereby rescuing the Bani Isrā'īl from his oppression, which they had suffered for over 400 years long years.

Another meaning of the Arabic word *'balā'* (*translated above as trial"*) is a 'prize' or a 'favour.' If this translation is used, it would mean that their rescue from Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) was a tremendous prize or favour from Allāh.

It has been mentioned that Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) saw in a dream (or was told by fortune-tellers) that a youth from the Bani Isrā'īl will destroy his kingdom. It was due to this reason that he undertook to slay all the boys born of the Bani Isrā'īl. Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born during the period when this infanticide was taking place. Allāh ensured his safety even though he grew up in Pharaoh's (*Fir'auns*)' palace.

وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ ٱلْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَٰكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿50﴾

(50) When We split the sea for you and drowned the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) while you *watched*.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL CROSS THE SEA WHEREAS PHARAOH (*FIR'AUN*) AND HIS ARMY ARE DROWNED

Some historians have mentioned that Pharaoh's (*Fir'aun*) name was Walīd, while others say that it was Mūsa. However, he was extremely tyrannical and hailed from the Ād [the nation of Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام]. He ruled Egypt and claimed divinity.

Allāh instructed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to leave Egypt one night: with the Bani Isrā'īl so that none comes to know. However. Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) received intelligence of this and mustered a large army to pursue them.

As day broke, the Bani Isrā'īl saw this army on their heels and feared being apprehended. However, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام assured them that Allāh was with him and would come to their assistance. Consequently, Allāh ordered Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to strike his staff on the sea that was before them. When he did so, the waters cleaved into twelve roads, each being bordered by mountainous walls of water.

The Bani Isrā'īl crossed over safely. When Pharaoh (*Fir'aun)* and his army attempted to cross, Allāh closed the roads, causing the water to come crashing down upon them. All this took place before the Bani Isrā'īl. Therefore, Allāh says to the Bani Isrā'īl that He *'drowned the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) while you watched.'*

As he was being drowned, Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) declared his belief in Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Yunus, *"Till (the time came when) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) began to drown, he said, I believe that there is no deity except Him Whom the Bani Isrā'īl believe and I am from those who surrender."*

Thereupon Allāh told him, *"Do you believe now? When you were disobedient before and amongst the corrupters? Today We shall preserve you with your body to be sign for those after you."* [*verses 90, 91 and 92*]

A detailed account of the Bani Isrā'īl and Pharaoh's (*Fir'aun's*) drowning is mentioned in Surahs TāHā, Shu'arā and Dukhān.

وَإِذْ وَٰعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰٓ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذْتُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَأَنتُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ ثُمَّ
عَفَوْنَا عَنكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

(51) When We promised Mūsa عليه السلام forty nights, then you took to worship the calf after him, and you were oppressors. (52) Thereafter We pardoned you so that you may be grateful.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام GOES TO MOUNT TŪR AND THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL BEGIN TO WORSHIP THE CALF.

After crossing the sea, the Bani Isrā'īl reached a plain from where they were to leave for Palestine. However, due to their disobedience (which is mentioned in verses 20 to 26 of Surah Mā'idah) they were made to wander in circles in a single plain for 40 years. During this period, Allāh granted Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام the

Torah.

To receive the Torah, Allāh summoned Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to *Mount Tūr,* where he was required to seclude himself and fast for thirty days. After the thirtieth day, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام brushed his teeth with a Miswāk, due to which the smell of fasting was removed from his mouth.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that the smell from the mouth of a fasting person is more beloved to Allāh than the smell of musk. [*Bukhari*] When this smell vanished, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was commanded to fast for another ten days. In this way, he spent forty nights on the mountain. Verse 142 of Surah Arāf clearly mentions that the thirty days were extended to forty.

SĀMIRIYY *(SĀMIRI)* MOULDS A CALF FROM GOLD JEWELLERY, WHICH THE BANI LSRĀ'ĪL BEGAN TO WORSHIP.

Before the Bani Isrā'īl left Egypt, they borrowed Jewellery from the Copts. This 'Jewellery' was still in their possession after they crossed the sea. A goldsmith amongst them, by the name of Sāmiriyy *(Sāmiri)*, gathered all this Jewellery when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left for Mount Tūr *(Sinai)*. He then moulded this Jewellery into the shape of a calf.

Thereafter he placed sand into the mouth of the calf, which enabled the calf to make sounds. He collected this sand from beneath the hooves of Jibr'īl's عليه السلام steed. Allāh had made the sand (the life giving power) such that it could have the effect of giving off a sound from the calf. When the Bani Isrā'īl saw this golden calf making sounds, they were extremely impressed and, because they had become accustomed to idol worship in Egypt, they said to each other, "*This is your Lord and the Lord of Mūsa, but he forgot* (that our Lord is here, so he went to speak to Him on Mount Tūr). " [*Surah TāHā verse 88*]

Surah TāHā also mentions the following: "*Harūn* عليه السلام *definitely told them before, 'Oh my people! You are merely being tested therewith. Without doubt, your Lord is the Beneficent (Rahmān), so follow me and obey me. They replied 'We shall certainly remain devoted to it (the calf) till Mūsa returns to us."* [*verses 90 and 91*]

SĀMIRYY *(SĀMIRI)* IS CURSED AND THE CALF IS BURNT.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام returned, he was extremely angry to learn what had transpired. After questioning Sāmiryy *(Sāmiri)*, he told him, "Go! Your punishment in this world shall be that you wander around saying *'Do not touch!'*" [*Surah TāHā, verse 97*] As a result of this, whenever Sāmiryy *(Sāmiri)* touched anyone, or was touched by anyone, both persons would be afflicted by a severe fever.

Thereafter, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told him, "*Look at your deity that you remained so devoted to. We will surely burn it and then scatter it well in the ocean. Your deity is only Allāh, besides Whom there is no other deity. His knowledge encompasses everything.*" [*Surah TāHā verses 96 and 97*]

The ensuing verses will discuss the part of the verse where Allāh says *"Thereafter We pardoned you so that you may be grateful"*

وَإِذْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿53﴾

(53) When We gave Mūsa the Book and the Criterion so that you may be rightly guided.

THE BOUNTY OF THE TORAH.

One of the greatest bounties that Allāh bestowed on the Bani Isrā'īl was that He granted them the Torah. Allāh says about the Torah in Surah An'ām, *"Then We gave Mūsa the Book whereby the favour was completed for those who did good and which contained the details of everything. And it was a guidance and a mercy so that they become convinced of meeting their Lord."* [*verse* 154]

The Torah is also described as the *"Criterion"* i.e. the discerner between right and wrong. Some commentators have mentioned that this means that the Torah differentiated between permissible *(halāl)* and prohibited *(harām)*. Both the above interpretations are applicable because the Torah was an embodiment of all this.

Other commentators have mentioned that the *"Criterion"* refers to Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام miracles, which serves to substantiate his Risalat (prophethood). All the bounties that were given to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام may also be called the bounties of the Bani Isrā'īl because Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was their Prophet and was also one of them. However, instead of being grateful for all these bounties, the Bani Isrā'īl were ungrateful and, instead of being guided, they took the path of deviation.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُم بِٱتِّخَاذِكُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَٱقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِندَ بَارِئِكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿54﴾

(54) When Mūsa told his people, "Oh my people! You have certainly oppressed your souls by taking the calf as your deity. So turn in repentance to your Creator and slay yourselves. That is best for you in the sight of your Creator." Then Allāh will accept your repentance. In deed, He is the Most Pardoning, the Most Merciful.

THE REPENTANCE OF THOSE WHO WORSHIPPED THE CALF AND THE COMMAND TO EXECUTE EACH OTHER.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام became very angry when he saw such a large number of people worshipping the calf He therefore advised them to mend their ways and repent to Allāh. Surah A'rāf mentions, *"When they regretted and realized that they were astray, they said, If our Lord does not show mercy to us and forgive us, we will certainly be of the losers."* [*verse* 149]

As a form of expressing their repentance Allāh commanded that those of them who did not worship the calf should execute those who did worship the

calf. Commentators mention that when the family and friends of the executors came before them to be executed, they hesitated. Therefore, Allāh sent a heavy cloud to envelope them so that none could recognise the other.

Executions took place the entire day until the evening. Sayyidina Mūsa and Hārūn عليه السلام engaged in praying to Allāh, after which the cloud was lifted and the repentance accepted. By then, 70,000 people had already been executed. Although all those who worshipped the calf were not executed, Allāh pardoned all of them due to the execution of the 70,000. [*Baydawi, Ibn Kathīr*]

The phrase *"So turn in repentance to your Creator"* tells them that they were foolish to ignore the Being Who created them and to worship a lifeless calf. The penalties imposed in this world are much lighter than the eternal punishment of the Hereafter. Losing one's life in this world in lieu of eternal salvation is indeed a cheap bargain. Referring to this, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told them. *"That is best for you in the sight of your Creator."*

It is indeed Allāh's great boon to the ummah (followers) of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that their repentance was accepted, they were merely required to repent sincerely, to resolve never to repeat the sin, and to fulfill the rights due to Allāh and to fellow men. The doors of repentance are open to them even if they perpetrate the worst of sins like infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*.

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَـٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى ٱللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ ٱلصَّـٰعِقَةُ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَـٰكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

(55) When you said, "Oh Mūsa! We shall never believe you till we openly see Allāh." So a thunderbolt struck you while you watched. (56) Then We revived you after your deaths so that you could be grateful.

THE INSOLENCE OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL WHEN THEY ASKED TO SEE ALLĀH IN THIS WORLD.

After the incident of the calf, another crime that the Bani Isrā'īl committed was that they contested the authenticity of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. They told him that they will never believe that Allāh truly gave him the Torah until Allāh personally told them that the Torah was from Him. With Allāh's permission Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام selected seventy of their leaders and after instructing them to fast and to be physically pure, he took them to Mount Tūr.

When they heard Allāh confirm the divine origin of the Torah, they were not satisfied. They then said, *"Oh Mūsa! We shall never believe you till we openly see Allāh."* As a result of their insolence, Allāh caused a flash of lightning to burn them to cinders.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام became concerned about the fact that the Bani Isrā'īl would accuse him for the deaths of their leaders. Therefore, he prayed to Allāh to bring them back to life. Allāh says, *"Then We revived you after your deaths so that you could be grateful"*

وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْغَمَامَ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَنَّ وَٱلسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

(57) We shaded you with the clouds and sent manna and salwa to you. "Eat from the pure things that We have provided for you." They never oppressed Us, but only oppressed themselves.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL WERE SHADED BY CLOUDS IN THE PLAIN OF TĪH AND WERE SUSTAINED WITH MANNA AND SALWA FROM THE HEAVENS.

The Bani Isrā'īl used to grow extremely tired as they walked in circles on the plain of Tīh. Because of the Supplication *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, Allāh caused a cloud to shade them all the time. The cloud would travel with them wherever they went, giving them comfort from the intense heat. Since they were unable to earn a living because of their perpetual travels, Allāh also provided food for them in the form of manna and salwa:

WHAT IS MANNA?

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that manna was some type of food that descended on trees at night. In the mornings, they used to collect as much as they needed. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that it was type of sweetmeat.

Sayyidina Ikrima رضى الله عنه is of the opinion that it was similar to thick marrow. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that manna would descend like ice, which was whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. It would come to them from the break of dawn till sunrise. Each person was allowed to take as much as one required for the day. Whatever extra they took would putrefy. However, on Fridays they collected all they needed for that Friday and the Saturday that followed. [*Ibn Kathīr.*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Ajwa (a type of date that is grown in Madinah) is one of the fruits of Heaven *(Jannah)* and is even a cure for poisoning. He also mentioned that mushrooms are manna, and that the water of a mushroom is an effective cure for the eyes. [*Tirmidhi and the second part has been narrated in Bukhari, v.2, p.43*]

This means that mushrooms are products of the manna which was given to the Bani Isrā'īl. The narrator of the above hadith Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that his slave girl was cured of weak sightedness when he put the juice of a mushroom into her eyes.

WHAT IS SALWA?

Salwa was a type of bird that resembled the partridge. Allāh caused an abundance of salwa to come with the winds to the Bani Isrā'īl. They would catch them easily, slaughter them and prepare them for meals. The Bani Isrā'īl were instructed not to slaughter more than they required but they did not comply

with the instruction. When they tried to eat the stored manna and salwa the following day, they would find that it had already putrefied and was inedible.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If it were not for the Bani Isrā'īl, food would never putrefy and give off an offensive odour. If it were not for Hawwa عليها السلام, no woman would have betrayed her husband." [*Bukhari, v.1, p469*]

Because of their lack of trust in Allāh, the Bani Isrā'īl stored the food for future use. They were punished for this by the spoiling of their foods. It was from then only that foods began to putrefy.

Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام was the first woman to betray her husband by encouraging him to eat from the forbidden tree. As a result, her progeny tend to follow in her footsteps. [*Mirqāt*]

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ٱدْخُلُوا۟ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْبَابَ سُجَّدًا
وَقُولُوا۟ حِطَّةٌ نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَٰيَٰكُمْ ۚ وَسَنَزِيدُ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (58) فَبَدَّلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟
قَوْلًا غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ رِجْزًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَفْسُقُونَ (59)

(58) When We said, "Enter this town and eat as much as you desire and from wherever you please. Enter the door with your heads lowered, saying, 'We seek forgiveness.' We will then pardon your sins. We shall soon grant more to those who do good." (59) The oppressors altered the words to that which they were not commanded so We sent a punishment from the heavens upon the oppressors because of their disobedience.

THE COMMAND TO ENTER A TOWN IN HUMILITY, THE IMPUDENCE OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL, AND THE RESULTANT PUNISHMENT

Some commentators say that the town referred to in the above verse is Baitul Muqaddas, while others are of the opinion that it was a place called Arīha (Jericho). Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that the first opinion is more accurate. The above incident occurred during the Risālat (prophethood) of Sayyidina Yusha bin Nūn عليه السلام, not during the lifetime of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

During the lifetime of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, the Bani Isrā'īl were commanded to wage jihād *(religious war)* against the Amāliqa (a powerful nation who were the descendants of the Ād) to secure entry into Baitul Muqaddas. However, they refused, as denoted in the following verses of Surah Mā'idah: *"They said, 'Oh Mūsa, honestly a tyrannical nation live there. Surely we shall never enter there till they leave. If they leave the land' then only shall we enter."* [*verse 22*]. They also added, *"Oh Mūsa, we shall never ever enter there as long as they are present there. So you and your Lord both go and fight. We shall remain sitting here."* [*verse 24*].

As a result of this, *"(Allāh declared) Undoubtedly this land is forbidden to them for forty years. They will wander bewildered in the earth."* [*Surah Mā'idah, verse 26*]. Therefore, they never entered Baitul Muqaddas till forty years later under the leadership of Sayyidina Yusha bin Noon عليه السلام, after the demise of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

They then overpowered the Amāliqa and, as a token of repentance, Allāh instructed them saying, *"Enter this town and eat as much as you desire and from wherever you please. Enter the door with your heads lowered, saying. 'We seek forgiveness.' We will then pardon your sins. We shall soon grant more to those who do good"*

However, they again failed to comply. Allāh says that they *"altered the words to that which they were not commanded"* Consequently, instead of entering with their heads bowed down, they entered dragging their posteriors on the ground, as children do. They did this mockingly and, instead of saying *"Hittatun"* (translated above as *"We seek forgiveness"*, they said the word *'hintatun fi sha'īratin"* (a grain of wheat in the ear). [*Bukhari, v.2,m, p.643*]

As a result of their gross insolence, Allāh *'Sent a punishment from the heavens upon the oppressors due to their disobedience."* This punishment was a plague which killed 70,000 of them at once.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that plagues are a form of punishment by which Allāh punished those in bygone times. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

A believer *(Mumin)* should always turn his attention to Allāh and be humble before Him, especially when He bestows His grace. Upon the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entered Makkah in humility and then, during midmorning, performed eight rakāhs of Salāh in Umm Hāni's رضى الله عنها house.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that some Scholars *(Ulama)* say that these eight rakāhs were the *Salātud Dhuhā (Salāh perform at daytime)*, whereas others say that it was *Salātul Fatah* (i.e. a Salāh of victory). They say that it is best for a Muslim leader to perform these eight rakāhs whenever he conquers any place. Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqqās رضى الله عنه performed this Salāh when he conquered Persia. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1. p.99*]

۞ وَإِذِ ٱسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ فَقُلْنَا ٱضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْحَجَرَ ۖ فَٱنفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ ٱثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۖ كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ مِن رِّزْقِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

(60) When Mūsa sought water for his people, We told him, "Strike the stone with your staff" Then twelve springs gushed forth from there. Every group knew their place of drinking. "Eat and drink from Allāh's provision and do not spread corruption on earth."

WATER IS PRODUCED FROM A STONE FOR THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL

The Bani Isrā'īl required water when they were on the plain of Tīh. They

therefore requested Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to pray to Allāh for some water. Allāh says, *"When Mūsa sought water for his people, We told him, 'Strike the stone with your staff' Then twelve springs gushed forth from there."* Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the stone was small and squared, which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام kept in a bag. Whenever the Bani Isrā'īl required water, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام would strike the stone, after which water would gush forth. When they had taken their share of water, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام would pick up the stone and put it back in his bag.

"Every group (tribe) *knew their place of drinking."* Allāh truly favoured them by granting the manna, salwa and sufficient water. Allāh told them, *"Eat and drink from Allāh's provision and do not spread corruption on earth."* Murder, anarchy and disobedience of Allāh's orders constitute the greatest forms of corruption on earth.

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَـٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَٰحِدٍ فَٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنۢبِتُ ٱلْأَرْضُ مِنۢ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّآئِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا ۖ قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ ٱلَّذِى هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِٱلَّذِى هُوَ خَيْرٌ ۚ ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُم مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ ۗ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلذِّلَّةُ وَٱلْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا۟ وَّكَانُوا۟ يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

(61) When you said, "Oh Mūsa! We can never tolerate one type of food. Pray to your Lord on our behalf, (asking Him) to extract for us what the earth produces," its greens, cucumbers, wheat, lentils and onions." Mūsa عليه السلام said, "Do you wish to receive what is inferior in exchange for that which is superior? Go down to any town and you will find what you ask for. Humiliation and poverty were stamped on them, and they became deserving of Allāh's wrath. This was because they disbelieved in Allāh's verses and used to kill the Prophets (Anbiya) unlawfully. This was because of their disobedience and transgression.

THE BANI LSRĀ'ĪL COMPLAIN THAT THEY CANNOT TOLERATE ONLY ONE TYPE OF FOOD AND DEMAND TO EAT VEGETABLES.

Its natural that a man soon tires of the same type of diet. The same occurred to the Bani Isrā'īl who received the same manna and salwa twice daily. It was for this reason that they complained to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. What they should have done was to recall the appalling conditions which they suffered in Egypt where they could not utter a word when their children were being slaughtered. It was appropriate for them to be grateful for the food, thinking that Allāh Who delivered them from the intense hardships was giving it to them.

However, they seemed not to appreciate Allāh's bounty and complained to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, saying, *"Oh Mūsa! We can never tolerate one type of food*

Pray to your Lord on our behalf ('asking Him) to extract for us what the earth produces, from its greens, cucumbers, wheat, lentils and onions."

Their mode of address was most contemptuous because they spoke as if Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and his Lord had placed them in a situation of difficulty. They spoke as if Allāh was not their Lord, but only the Lord of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Therefore, they demanded that he resolve the issue. They failed to realise that the situation that they now faced was immeasurably better than their previous situation of slavery and degradation.

When people become accustomed to degradation and humiliation, they do not appreciate honour and respect. They desire only to fulfil their carnal pleasures, irrespective of the degradation involved.

THE DISPLEASURE OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام

When the Bani Isrā'īl made the request they did, *"Mūsa* عليه السلام *said, 'Do you wish to receive what is inferior in exchange for that which is superior (and which is acquired without any effort,)? Go down to any town and you will find what you ask for".*

The Arabic word *'fūm' (translated above as "wheat")* may also be translated as 'garlic' according to the language, of the Banu Hashim, as related by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رحمة الله عليه. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه has also translated it as 'garlic.' Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has reported from certain Scholars *(Ulama)* that the word refers to any grains that are eaten whole. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.101*]

DEGRADATION AND POVERTY FOR THE JEWS

"Humiliation and poverty were stamped on them" Despite their immense wealth, the Jews always hanker after more, and they have always been trampled upon by other nations. The author of "Ma'alimut Tanzīl writes, "The Jews will always be poor even though they possess abundant wealth. It is mentioned that humiliation also refers to the poverty of the heart. From all the denominations of Dīn *(Religion)*, you will find that the Jews are the greediest and most disgraced people."

One will notice that the Jews are prepared to give their lives for wealth and will fall ill if any harm came to their wealth. This reflects bankruptcy of the heart.

THE JEWS DESERVE ALLĀH'S WRATH BECAUSE THEY MURDERED THE PROPHETS *(ANBIYA)* عليهم السلام.

Allāh continues, to say, *"and they became deserving of Allāh's wrath. This was because they disbelieved in Allāh 's verses and used to kill the Prophets (Anbiya)* عليهم السلام *unlawfully. This was because of their disobedience and transgression."* Although murder is always unlawful, Allāh mentions the word "unlawfully" because the killing of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام was even accepted by them as being wrong. Another reason for it being mentioned is that none of them ever regretted this behaviour.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that the Bani Isrā'īl would kill three hundred Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام in the

morning, and then proceed to the bazārs to transact business as if nothing had happened. Sayyidina Zakariyya and Yahya عليه السلام were amongst the more famous Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام whom the Bani Isrā'īl assassinated.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the persons who will be most severely punished on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyamah)* will be:

- *The person who killed a Prophet.*
- *The person who was killed by a Prophet.*
- *The person who killed any one of his parents.*
- *The person who makes pictures.*
- *The learned religious scholar who does not benefit from his knowledge. [Mishkāt p. 378]*

A QUESTION REGARDING THE RULE OF THE JEWS

Since the Jews have seized control of some land, certain unenlightened people have raised the question regarding the authenticity of the Qur'ānic prophesy that they will never establish any rule for themselves. It should firstly be understood that the Qur'ān did not make such a statement. In fact, Surah Āl Imrān also makes an exception to their state of humiliation, when Allāh says, *"Disgrace has been smitten upon them wherever they found except by the rope from Allāh and the rope from man."* [*verse* 112]

An example of the *"rope from Allāh"* will be when a Jew grows old and does not fight the Muslims because of his engagement in worship. In this case, the Muslims will leave him untouched.

An example of the *"rope from man"* will be when Muslims enter into a peace treaty with the Jews, or when they are accorded temporary respect because of their alliance with a powerful nation. It is obvious that the Jewish state is only existing because of the support of certain Christians countries, without whom it cannot survive.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ وَٱلصَّٰبِـِٔينَ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

(62) Verily those who believe, the Jews, the Christians and the Sabians who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, and who carry out good deeds, theirs will be a reward by their Lord. There shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.

ONLY BELIEF *(IMĀN)* AND GOOD DEEDS ARE THE CRITERIA FOR SALVATION

The disgrace and humiliation that has been imposed on the Jews because of

their transgression is not exclusive to them. Similarly, no nation can claim that salvation in the Hereafter and rewards are exclusively for them. Acceptance by Allāh and salvation in the Hereafter can be attained by any person who possesses Belief *(Imān)*.

The definition of Belief *(Imān)* also varies according to the times. For example, the Belief *(Imān)* of the Jews during the time of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was that they believed in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the Torah after believing in Allāh. Similarly, the Belief *(Imān)* of the Christians during the time of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام was to believe in him, the Injīl and whatever laws he propagated as part of his Shari'ah. These people would then be deserving of salvation in the Hereafter. However, those who altered his Dīn *(Religion)* did not remain believers with Belief *(Imān)* Since the Jews in the time of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام refused to believe in him, they also became Disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

THE UNIVERSAL RISALSAT *(PROPHETHOOD)* OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Finally, Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent as a Prophet to the world. Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام told his followers about the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم advent, as mentioned in Surah Saff [verse 6], where he says, *"And I convey to you the glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad"*

Allāh says in Surah Arāf, *"Those who follow the unlettered messenger and Prophet that they find written with them in the Torah and Injīl "*[*verse 157*]

Therefore, it is imperative for the followers of the previous Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام to also follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in verse 85 of Surah Āl Imrān, *"Whosoever seeks a Dīn (Religion) besides Islām, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be amongst the losers in the Hereafter."*

Every person who existed in the world since the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as well as every person still to be born till Judgment day *(Qiyamah)* has to accept the Dīn *(Religion)* brought by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Verse 158 of Surah Arāf states, *"Say [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] Oh people! Verily I am Allāh 's messenger to all of you"*

Allāh says in Surah Fātir [*verse 28*], *"We have sent you as a warner and bearer of glad tidings to the whole of mankind, but most people do not know."*

Therefore since the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the success of every Jew, Christian, Sabian, etc depends solely on following him. After understanding the foregoing explanation, one will easily grasp the proper meaning of the verse being discussed. The verse means that if any Jew, Christian or Sabian believes in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as Allāh's final messenger, believes in imminence of the Day of Resurrection *(Qiyamah)*. and verbally attests to this, then one will attain salvation in the Hereafter. Together with this, one must also perform good deeds according to the way which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم showed.

MEANINGLESS CALL FOR RELIGIOUS UNITY.

The foregoing passage has been expressly written for the benefit of our

present-day heretics who call for religious unity. Many of them say (Allāh forbid!) that belief in Allāh and the Day of Resurrection *(Qiyamah)* is sufficient to secure one s salvation, even though one does not enter into the fold of Islām. They substantiate their stand by claiming that the above verse declares salvation for the person who merely believes 'in Allāh and the Last Day. They say that belief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is not necessary to qualify' one for this honour.

They merely say this to beguile others. What they do not inform people of is that belief in Allāh does not merely mean belief in the Being of Allāh, whereafter one may worship Him as he pleases. Allāh's worship must be carried out in the manner demonstrated by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

How can belief in Allāh be true when people are worshipping idols and attributing children to Him? How can belief in the Day of Resurrection *(Qiyamah)* be true when people believe in reincarnation and refute the existence of Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell?

THE REASON FOR THE JEWS BEING CALLED *"YAHŪD."*

The meaning of the Arabic word *"Yahūd"* is "to repent.' They are given this name because they repented for worshipping the calf. A group of Jews are called "Yahūd." while an individual will be called a *"Yahūdi"*. Certain Scholars (*Ulama*) have mentioned that they were named after the eldest son of Sayyidina Yaqub عليه السلام whose name was Yahūda. Others mention that the name is derived from the Arabic root word "tahūd" which means 'to shake' or 'to vibrate.' They were named thus because they used to shake their bodies every time they heard the Torah.

THE *NASĀRĀ*

The word *Nasārā* refers to the Christians, i.e. the followers of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام. The word is derived from the root word 'nusra which means 'to help.' In Surah Saff [*verse 14*], Allāh mentions how Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام asked his followers as to who of them will render him assistance. His disciples volunteered by saying, *"We are the helpers of Allāh."*

Another word synonymous to *Nasārā* is *Nasrān*. The singular of both words is *Nasrāni*. Certain commentators have mentioned that they received this name because they lived in a place called Nāsirah. The true *Nasārā* therefore refers to those people who follow Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and the Injīl. Although Allāh has used the word *'Nasārā'* to describe those who adulterated the Injīl and who idolised Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, Allāh never called them 'Isā'i [people associated with Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام]. Such a word cannot be used for Polytheists who have no real association with Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام.

THE SABIANS.

The Arabic word 'Sābi'in' (translated above as *"Sabians")* is derived from the root verbs 'sabā' and 'yasbu.' They were present during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The following descriptions of these people have been given:

- *They were people whose Dīn (Religion) was a mixture of Judaism, Christianity and fire worshipping. [Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه]*
- *They worshipped the angels. [Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه]*
- *They lived near Iraq, believed in all the Prophets (Anbiya) عليهم السلام, fasted for thirty days annually and prayed facing towards Yemen. [Sayyidina Abu Zinād رحمة الله عليه]*
- *They lived on the island of Musil and recited only "Lā Ilāha Illallāh." [Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Zaid رحمة الله عليه]*
- *Their Dīn (Religion) was similar to Christianity; they faced towards the south in prayer and believed that they followed the Dīn (Religion) of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. [Sayyidina Khalīl رحمة الله عليه]*
- *They were neither Jews, nor Christians, nor fire-worshippers, nor idolators. Instead, they believed in Allāh's oneness (Tauhīd), but followed no specific Dīn (Religion). [Sayyidina Wahb bin Munabbih رحمة الله عليه]*
- *They were people whom none of the Prophets (Anbiya) عليهم السلام had reached.*

[All of the above has been extracted from Ibn Kathīr].

NOTE: The author of Bayānul Qur'ān writes that the verse means: "No person receives preferential treatment in Our court. We will receive any person whose beliefs and deeds are acceptable irrespective of ones past." It is obvious that, after the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the above is only possible as a Muslim. Therefore, one can only aspire for salvation if one is a Muslim.

Since Muslims are implied in the verse, there was no necessity to mention *"Verily those who believe"* However, the phrase has been specifically added so as to lend added weight to the message. The example is like how a king would say when he announces, "The law is general, even though one may support it or oppose it. The one who supports it will be rewarded." It is obvious that those who support the law will obey it. It was not really necessary to mention them. However, the reason for mentioning the fact is that people may understand that the favour to be bestowed on the obedient ones will not be due to any personal virtue of theirs, but because they have obeyed the law. Therefore, if any opposed person was to mend his ways and obey the law in question, one will also be rewarded equally.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَـٰقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ ٱلطُّورَ خُذُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَيْنَـٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿63﴾ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَكُنتُم مِّنَ ٱلْخَـٰسِرِينَ ﴿64﴾

(63) When We took your covenant and raised Mount Tūr above you (saying) "Hold fast to what We have given you and remember what is therein so that you may attain to piety. (64) Thereafter, you turned away. If it were not for Allāh 's grace upon you and his mercy, you would have certainly become of the losers.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL BREACH THE COVENANT THAT THEY SOLEMNIZED.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was given the Torah, the Bani Isrā'īl undertook a covenant that they would fulfil all the obligations contained in the Torah and adhere strictly to their Dīn *(Religion)*. However, when they realised that the laws were too difficult, they refused to comply. It was for this reason that Allāh uprooted Mount Tūr and raised it to hover above their heads saying, *"Hold fast to what We have given you and remember what is therein so that you may attain to piety."*

Allāh mentions the same incident in more detail in Surah A'rāf, when He says, *"When We uprooted the mountain above them as if it was a canopy and they thought that it would fall on them. 'Hold fast on to what We have given you and remember what is therein so that you may adopt piety (taqwa)."* [*verse 171*]

When the Bani Isrā'īl were threatened with the mountain falling on them, they accepted the conditions of the covenant, but later breached it again. However, Allāh again granted them the opportunity to repent and continuously sent Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام to remind them. With reference to this Allāh says, *"Thereafter you turned away. If it was not for Allāh 's grace upon you and his mercy, you would have certainly become of the losers."* [*Ibn Kathīr*]

An objection may be raised at this juncture to the effect that Allāh mentions *"There is no compulsion in Dīn (Religion)"* [*Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 256*]. Therefore, why were the Bani Isrā'īl compelled to act on their Dīn *(Religion)*? It must be noted that verse 256 of Surah Al-Baqarah refers to compulsion in accepting Islām. No person will be forced to become a Muslim. If he is living in a Muslim country, he will merely have to pay the jizya (protection tax), where after he can live peacefully as he is.

The Bani Isrā'īl were threatened with the mountain after they had entered into their Dīn *(Religion)*. A person who reneges after accepting Islām will be granted three day's respite to revert. He will be executed only if he refuses to revert thereafter.

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱعْتَدَوْا۟ مِنكُمْ فِى ٱلسَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا۟ قِرَدَةً خَـٰسِـِٔينَ ﴿65﴾
فَجَعَلْنَـٰهَا نَكَـٰلًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿66﴾

(65) You are certainly well aware of those from you who transgressed with regard to the Sabbath. So We told them, "Become despised monkeys!". (66) We made it a lesson for those who were present before them, as well as for those after them, and (We made their incident) an admonition for those who fear.

THE JEWS VIOLATE THE SABBATH AND ARE TRANSFORMED INTO MONKEYS.

Just as Fridays are sacred to the Muslims, Saturdays were declared sacred for the Jews. They were commanded to revere the day and not to fish on Saturdays. This command was a test for them, due to which Allāh made the fish appear abundantly on the surface on Saturdays. The story is mentioned in Surah A'rāf, where Allāh says, *"Ask them about the village that was at the seaside, when they transgressed with regard to the Sabbath, when their fish would be visible from the surface on Saturdays, but would not come on other days. Thus did We test them due to their disobedience'* [*verse 163*]

To avoid this restriction, the Bani Isrā'īl devised a scheme whereby they could still catch the fish without actually fishing on Saturdays. They would cast their nets and rods on Fridays, leaving these in the water till Saturday, when the fish would appear in large schools. The fish would then be caught in the nets and hooks of the rods without anyone having to stand by. They would pull in the nets and rods after Saturday, claiming that they did not fish on the Sabbath.

Allāh punished them by transforming them into monkeys. They were unable to speak and even grew tails like monkeys. When the others reminded them about how they forbade them from their fishing schemes, they could only nod their heads in confirmation. Verse 60 of Surah Mā'idah, describes the Jews as people whom Allāh had *"transformed into monkeys and pigs."* This verse may either refer to this incident or another because no clear narration has been mentioned in this regard.

However, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has mentioned that the young transgressors in the above incident were transfigured into monkeys, while the older ones became pigs. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has also mentioned that these people lived for only three days after their transfiguration, whereafter they died. They neither ate, drank, nor reproduced during the three days. The monkeys and pigs present today have no ties with these people, but are a separate creation of Allāh.

Sayyidah Ummu Salma رضی الله عنها reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that no progeny issued forth from the nations whom Allāh had transfigured. [*Fat'hul Qadīr. v.5, p.466*]

Further details about this incident will be mentioned in Surah A'rāf. Allāh has been graceful in that He has not transfigured any part of the Holy Prophet's صلی الله علیه وسلم ummah, but this will occur towards Judgment day *(Qiyamah)*, as reported in Tirmidhi and Bukhari. [*Mishkāt, p. 456*]

Allāh says in the verse under discussion, *"We made it* (the town, or the punishment) *a lesson for those who were present before them, as well as for those after them, and* (We made their incident) *an admonition for those who fear."*

The phrase *"as well as for those after them"* refer to the people in the times after them, as well as to the people living in other areas, as mentioned by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه.

"(We made their incident) *an admonition for those who fear."* Sayyidina

Atiyya Awfi رحمة الله عليه says that *"those who fear"* refers to the ummah (followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Do not perpetrate what the Jews did by using schemes to justify what is harām."*

Another scheme that the Jews devised to justify what was harām concerned the fat of animals. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that they made it presentable and then sold it. [*Mishkāt, p. 241*] Making it presentable! means that they melted the fat, mixed other substances with it, gave it another name and then sold it to people. It is unfortunate that the ummah followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have also begun to resort to such schemes.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم, *"People will soon make liquor lawful (halāl)."* "How will they do this when Allāh has explicitly made it unlawful *(harām)*?" asked the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "They will make it lawful *(halāl)* by changing the name." [*Mishkāt, p. 461*]

It is common nowadays for some people to give other names to liquor and usury, thereby trying to justify them. They devise schemes so that they do not have to pay Zakāh and even concoct various interpretations to justify carving statues and taking pictures. They even manage to devise ways of justifying the shaving of the beard. May Allāh guide the ummah Āmīn.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تَذْبَحُوا۟ بَقَرَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِٱللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِىَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌۢ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ فَٱفْعَلُوا۟ مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَآءُ فَاقِعٌ لَّوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ ٱلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِىَ إِنَّ ٱلْبَقَرَ تَشَٰبَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّآ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِى ٱلْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَّا شِيَةَ فِيهَا ۚ قَالُوا۟ ٱلْـَٰٔنَ جِئْتَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

(67) When Mūsa said to his people, "Verily Allāh commands you to slaughter a bullock." They said, "Are you joking with us?" He replied, "I seek refuge with Allāh that I become of the ignorant" (68) They said, "Call to your Lord to explain to us what type of bullock it should be." He said, "In deed, Allāh says that it must be a bullock that is neither old nor young, but aged between the two. So do as you are commanded." (69) They said, "Call to your Lord to explain to us what colour he should be." He said, "Allāh says that he should be a bright yellow

bullock, which is pleasing to the observers." (70) They said, "Call to your Lord to explain to us exactly what type of bullock he should be, because all bullocks appear the same to us. Then, if Allāh wills, we will be rightly guided." (71) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "Allāh says that he must be a bullock that is perfect, does not till the soil, nor water the fields, and without any blemish." They said, Now you have brought the truth. So they slaughtered it although they never wanted to."

THE STORY OF THE BULLOCK

The Arabic word 'Al-Baqarah' refers to both, a cow and a bullock. Many commentators have opted to translate the word as bullock because the final verse above mentions that the animal must *"not till the soil nor water the fields"* This type of work is usually done by bullocks not cows. However, many commentators have also translated the word as 'cow,' but the first translation is best because it is substantiated by a Qur'ānic verse.

The forthcoming verses allude to an incident when a person was found murdered amongst the Bani Isrā'īl. The murderer was unknown, so Allāh informed them that they should slaughter a bullock, and, with a piece of its flesh strike the dead body. This would bring the person back to life so that he could inform people who the killer was. After much contention, they finally did as they were told.

The details of the incident vary according to the various reports in the books of exegesis *(tafsīr)*. Ibn Kathīr reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that an extremely wealthy old man lived in the time of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. His only heirs were his brother's sons, who happened to be very poor. They eagerly awaited his death, but he had a very long life.

Eventually Satan *(Shaytān)* persuaded them to kill him so that they could inherit his estate, as well as the blood money The law at that time dictated that when a person was found dead between two towns and the killer was unknown, the people residing in the town closest to the body would have to pay the blood money. Therefore, Satan *(Shaytān)* advised them to carry his body closer to the town in which they did not live.

Subsequently, they did as planned, carrying the dead body to the doors of the other town. The following morning they claimed the blood money from the people of that town. The people swore that they were innocent, saying that they could not be blamed because they had not opened the doors of their town the entire night. Therefore, none of their residents could have come out.

The commentator Suddi رحمة الله عليه reports the matter differently. He says that a poor person from the Bani Isrā'īl desired to marry his wealthy uncle's daughter. However, the uncle refused his proposal. He eventually decided to murder his uncle, thinking that he would then inherit his fortune, marry his daughter and also earn the blood money. Consequently, on the pretext of some business, he took his uncle somewhere one night and killed him.

Pretending to be searching for his uncle the next morning, he found people gathered around his uncle's corpse. Weeping and throwing sand on his head, he

exclaimed his exasperation at the fact that they murdered his uncle, and claimed the blood money from them.

Whatever the incident, the people approached Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام for a solution to the problem. It was then that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told them, *"Verily Allāh commands you to slaughter a bullock* (then strike the corpse with a piece of its flesh)." At this, they should have immediately slaughtered any bullock they could find. However, they asked Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *Are you joking with us.?"* They said this because they could not believe that there could be any relationship between some meat and information about the murderer.

They never paused to think that a Prophet of Allāh who receives divine revelation was speaking to them. Upset at their outburst, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام exclaimed, "I *seek refuge with Allāh that I become of the ignorant."* It would take an ignorant person to joke about Allāh's commands. Since the Bani Isrā'īl were never prepared to comply with Allāh's commands, they began to ask a series of unnecessary questions which attached more conditions and restrictions to the choice of bullock.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that they would have fulfilled the command by slaughtering any bullock, but they chose to make matters difficult by asking futile questions. As a result, Allāh made matters more difficult for them.

"They said, Call to your Lord to explain to us what type of bullock it should be (i.e of what age group).' *He said, indeed, Allāh says that it must be a bullock that is neither old nor young, but aged between the two. So do as you are commanded"*

However, they still did not comply and said further, *"Call to your Lord to explain to us what colour it should be. 'He said, 'Allāh says that he should be bright yellow bullock, which is pleasing to the observers. They said, 'Call to your Lord to explain to us exactly what type of bullock he should be, because all bullock's appear the same to us. Then, Allāh wills, we will be rightly guided"*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that if they had not said 'Insha Allāh" *("If Allāh wills')* on this occasion, they would have never found the bullock that was required. [*Although Durrul Manthūr has recorded this as a hadith* Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه says that it is most probably the words of Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه].

In reply to their final question, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, *"Allāh says that he must be a bullock that is perfect, does not till the soil, nor water the fields, and without any blemish* The bullock was to be perfectly healthy without any physical defect and the entire body was to be the same colour throughout without any marks of another colour.

"They said, 'Now you have brought the truth." Thereafter, they began searching for a bullock that fitted the description. The books of tafsīr mention (quoting sources from the Bani Isrā'īl) that they paid a large sum for the bullock which they found after extensive searching. The owner kept raising the price as they made repeated offers. Eventually a sum of gold was agreed upon, which was equal to ten times the weight of the bullock. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه reports that they filled the skin of the bullock with gold coins as the price. After securing the bullock, they reluctantly slaughtered it. Allāh says, *"So they slaughtered it although they never wanted to.',*

وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَءْتُمْ فِيهَا ۖ وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ
بِبَعْضِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُحْيِ اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

(72) When you murdered a soul, then began casting the blame on each other, while Allāh was to unveil what you concealed. (73) We said, "Strike it with a piece thereof" Thus does Allāh bring the dead back to life and show you His signs so that you may understand.

THE CULMINATION OF THE STORY

These verses reveal the reason for slaughtering the bullock. Allāh says, *"When you murdered a soul, then began casting the blame on each other, while 'Allāh was to unveil what you concealed'* Because they were pinning the blame on each other, Allāh wished to uncover the murderer by means of the bullock's flesh.

Consequently, they struck a piece of the meat between the dead man's shoulders, after which he came back to life. When they asked him who had murdered him, he said that his brother's son (*nephew*) had murdered him so that he could inherit his wealth and marry his daughter. The killer was then executed.

It will be futile to ask why Allāh did not bring the person back to life without the medium of the bullock. Man cannot perceive the wisdom of Allāh's commands, nor is it necessary for man to understand these. The believers *(Mu'minīn)* must believe and accept Allāh's decrees even though he cannot understand the wisdom behind. One of the reasons could be that Allāh wished to demonstrate to people the reluctance of the Bani Isrā'īl, so that they could learn from this.

"We said, Strike it with a piece thereof Thus does Allāh bring the dead back to life and show you His signs so that you may understand" There are many people who deny resurrection on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyamah).* Although their objections have been replied to in the Qur'ān, Allāh also demonstrates such happenings like resurrection to people at times, as it occurred in the above incident.

The incident occurred before many people and has been narrated by innumerable people through history. The narrations are so profuse that none can reject them.

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا
يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَٰرُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ
خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

(74) Thereafter your hearts hardened, becoming like rocks, or even harder. There are those rocks from which rivers gush forth, while some of them split open causing water to flow there from. Then there are even those that fall because of fear for Allāh. Allāh is not unaware of what you do.

THE RIGIDITY OF THE JEWS' HEART.

Describing the hard-heartedness of the Jews, Allāh says, *"Thereafter your hearts hardened, becoming like rocks, or even harder."* Their hearts are so hard that they do not even respond to the miracles of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

In fact, even rocks display some flexibility because *"There are those rocks from which rivers gush forth, while some of them split open causing water to flow there from. Then there are even those that fall because of fear for Allāh."*

The analogy in the verse has been drawn to rocks, which are even harder than steel because they do not melt. If a person's heart is soft, he would shed tears excessively (like how rivers flow from rocks). Otherwise, he would at least shed a few tears (like the splitting rock, which allows some water to escape). If no tears are apparent from the eyes, the heart should at least feel some sentiments (like the falling rock). However, none of these emotions can be detected in the Jews, making them harder than rocks. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

"Allāh is not unaware of what you do." He will grant every person his or her just dues. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah *"Due to their breach of the covenant, We Cursed them and made their hearts hard"* [*verse 13*]

THE COMMAND TO THE UMMAH OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم NOT TO BECOME HARD- HEARTED.

Allāh says in Surah Hadīd [*verse 16*], *"Has the time not arrived for the believers that their hearts should submit to Allāh 's remembrance and the truth that has been revealed. And that they do not become like those who have been given the Book before them, whereafter a long time has passed by them, causing their hearts to harden. Many of them are disobedient."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, 'The person who weeps for fear of Allāh will never enter Hell until milk returns into the teats of a cow." [*Targhīb wat Tarhīb*]

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Where does salvation lie?" The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Control your tongue so that it does not harm you. Your home should be spacious for you (i.e. you should not emerge unnecessarily), and you should weep over your sins." [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that an evil nature is displayed by the following four factors:

⇒ *Dryness of the eyes, i.e. they do not shed tears.*

⇒ *Hardness of the heart.*

⇒ *Entertaining lengthy hopes.*

⇒ *Greed for material belongings. [At Targhīb wat Tarhīb, v.4, p.2*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Oh people! Weep. If you are unable to do so, then pretend to weep. The people of Hell will weep so much that it would appear as if two streams are flowing down their cheeks. Their tears will then be exhausted, whereafter they will cry blood, causing their eyes to be injured. Their tears and blood will flow so profusely that boats will be able to sail therein." [*Mishkāt, p. 504*]

Frequent remembrance of death and the grave will soften the heart, allowing one to be able to weep. When a person complained of his hard heartedness to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he was advised to place his hand upon an orphan's head and to feed the poor. [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that no talk besides the dhikr (*remembrance*) of Allāh should take place because these types of talk harden the heart. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also added that hard-hearted people are furthest from Allāh. [*Tirmidhi*]

EVEN THE SO-CALLED INANIMATE OBJECTS HAVE LIFE AND THEY ALL GLORIFY ALLĀH.

It is often seen how water emerges from rocks, causing springs and rivers to find their source. However, people tend to object to part of the verse that states that certain rocks fall because of their fear for Allāh. People question this because they regard rocks as inanimate objects that cannot have any emotions such as fear.

People feel this way because these 'inanimate' objects cannot communicate with them and because man does not understand them as they really are. The fact is that all these seemingly 'inanimate objects' do have a degree of perception.

Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, "*The seven heavens and earth together with whatever is within them glorify' Him. There is nothing that does not glorify His praises, but you do not understand their glorification.*" [*verse 44*]

A verse of Surah Nūr reads, "*Do yon not see that everything in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh, including the birds with their wings spread out? Each one knows its Salāh and method of glorification. And Allah has knowledge of what you do.*" [*verse 41*]

Bukhari reports a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said. "Mount Uhud is a mountain that loves us and we love it." [*v.2, p.585*]

Sayyidina Jābir bin Samura رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily I recognise a rock in Makkah that used to greet me when I was made a Prophet." [*Muslim, vo.2,, p.245*]

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that when he accompanied the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to a place in Makkah, every tree and rock that they passed exclaimed, "Peace be on you, Oh messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم!" [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once held about seven to nine pebbles in his hand. He says that all these pebbles were glorifying Allāh, and that he actually heard them glorifying Allāh with sounds that resembled the buzzing of bees. [*Jam'ul Fawā'id*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه was once asked, "Who informed the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that the jinn were listening to his recitation of the Qur'ān?" He replied. "A tree that was nearby." [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

The incident of the weeping pillar is famous. It was a branch of a date palm next to which the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم used to stand and deliver the sermons. When he began to stand on the pulpit it began to weep bitterly. The Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم had to descend from the pulpit to console it, like a person pacifies a weeping child. the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said that it cried because it missed the dhikr *(remembrance)* that it used to listen to. [*Bukhari. v. 1. p, 506*]

When a Jewish woman invited the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and some of the Companions of prophet *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم for a meal while they were in Khaibar, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم suddenly instructed all those eating to stop. He then sent for the woman and told her that she had poisoned the meat. Astonished, she asked who had informed him. The Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied that the forelimb of the goat, which was in his hand, had informed him. She then admitted that she had poisoned it. [*Abu Dawūd*]

Hisn Hasīn reports from Tabrāni that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said. "A mountain calls to another mountain asking whether any person engaged in Allāh's dhikr has passed on it that day. When the other replies in the affirmative, the first mountain becomes happy.

All these narrations of Ahādīth and Qur'ānic verses prove that the things that we consider to be lifeless do have some life in them. It is because of a deficiency in ourselves that we cannot detect the life and perception that they possess. Allāh can also grant them the power to talk if He willed.

۞أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا۟ لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَـٰمَ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

(75) Do you wish they will believe in you whereas a party of them listen to Allāh's speech and then purposely alter it after understanding it?

BECAUSE OF THE OBSTINACY OF THE JEWS, ONE SHOULD NOT ENTERTAIN THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL EVER BELIEVE

Allāh says, *"Do you wish they (the Jews) will believe in you whereas a party of them (in the past) listen to Allāh's speech and then purposely alter it after understanding it?"* The later generation of Jews never criticised the evil deeds of their forebears, but still revered them and held them in high esteem. Just like the former Jews rejected the Prophets *(Anbiya)* علیهم السلام after witnessing various miracles and portents, the latter day Jews did the same to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم.

"....... a party of them listen to Allāh's speech and then purposely alter it after understanding it?" With regard to this phrase, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه mentions that it referred to the incident when Sayyidina Mūsa علیه السلام took seventy leaders of the Bani Isrā'īl to Mount Tūr to listen to the speech of Allāh.

When they returned to their people, they told them the opposite of what Allāh had mentioned.

Other commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to the adulteration of the Torah. The Jewish scholars used to accept bribes from people to alter certain injunctions to suit their desires. They would pass the appropriate ruling only to those who did not bribe them. They behaved in this manner even though they realised the error of their ways.

They also altered the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which appeared in the Torah so that people do not follow him.

وَإِذَا لَقُوا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوٓا ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوٓا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُم بِمَا فَتَحَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَآجُّوكُم بِهِۦ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿76﴾ أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿77﴾

(76) When they meet the believers they say, "We believe." However, when they are alone with one another, they say, "Do you inform them of what Allāh has disclosed to us so that they contest with us before your Lord? Do you have no understanding?" (77) Do they not know that Allāh has knowledge of what they conceal, as well as what they reveal?

THE HYPOCRISY OF THE JEWS.

The Jews behaved exactly like the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* who used to tell the Muslims that they sided with them, whereas they actually owed allegiance to the Disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Some Jews also pretended to be Muslims, and they would tell the Muslims about the prophecies that the Torah foretold about the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Certain commentators mention that when asked by the Aws and the Khazraj tribes, the Jews approved of the fact that they had believed in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and that they had invited him to live in Madinah. They also confirmed that fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's true messenger. However, when they were alone with the other Jews, they were rebuked for revealing the truth. The other Jews reproached them for confirming the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم apostleship and for informing people about his description in the Torah.

They told each other that the disclosure of such information would condemn them in Allāh's court because it reveals that they were aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Allāh's Prophet, yet they still rejected him. They were thus digging their own graves. [*Durrul Manthūr, v.1, p.81. and Ma'alimut Tanzīl, v.1, p.87*]

Allāh says, *"Do they not know that Allāh has knowledge of what they conceal, as well as what they reveal?"* They rebuke each other for revealing their secrets to the Muslims, least realising that, even if they conceal the truth, Allāh is well aware of their mischief. They will never be saved from His punishment.

وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

(78) There are illiterate people amongst them, whose only knowledge of the Book is hopes. They are involved only in conjecture.

THE FALSE EXPECTATIONS OF THE JEWS

Allāh speaks of the ignorant masses amongst the Jews who could neither read nor understand the Torah. The only knowledge that they had was that they would certainly enter Heaven *(Jannah)* and, if they should enter Hell, it would be for a few days only. They prided themselves for being the chosen and beloved slaves of Allāh because they were the descendants of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام.

These were some of the false hopes and expectations that they entertained. They believed that their sins and falsification of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would not present an obstacle to this exalted position that they fashioned for themselves.

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

(79) Destruction be to those who write the scripture with their hands and then say, "This is from Allāh," so that they may sell it for a measly price. Destruction be to them because of what their hands write and destruction be to them because of what they earn.

THE BRIBERY ACCEPTED BY THE JEWISH SCHOLARS FOR PASSING INACCURATE RULINGS

When people approached the Jewish scholars for rulings on certain matters, these scholars would pass rulings which suited them best, on condition that they were offered a bribe. They would then alter or even reverse the teachings of the Torah, telling people that the ruling was in accordance with what Allāh had revealed in the Torah. They would not alter the ruling in favour of someone who did not offer them a bribe.

Thus they commit a dual sin by altering Allāh's scripture and by accepting bribery as well. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Destruction be to them because of what their hands write and destruction be to them because of what they earn.'*

The gains of this world are paltry compared to the everlasting boons of the Hereafter. By accepting Islām and encouraging their congregations to do the same, the Jewish scholars would have become worthy of eternal bliss and comfort, which cannot be compared to the slight loss in wealth and position, that may be incurred in this world.

Even though the masses were ignorant of the teachings of the Torah, they ought to have realised that they could trust people who pass appropriate rulings

only when they are bribed.

وَقَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا ٱلنَّارُ إِلَّآ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً ۚ قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَن يُخْلِفَ ٱللَّهُ عَهْدَهُۥٓ ۖ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

(80) They say, "The Fire will only touch us for a limited number of days." Say, "Have you taken a pledge with Allāh which He cannot breach or do you attribute to Allāh such statements that you have no knowledge of"

THE FALSE NOTION OF THE JEWS THAT THEY WILL REMAIN ONLY A SHORT WHILE IN HELL

The Jews claimed that they cannot be punished because they are adherents of Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام Dīn *(Religion)* which they believed still has not been cancelled. They believed that even if they are to be punished, their punishment will last only for the number of days within which their forefathers worshipped the calf, i.e. forty days.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Jews claimed that they will suffer only one day's punishment for every thousand of the seven thousand years that the world is in existence (i.e. punishment for seven days only). They believed that the Muslims will take their place in Hell after they have left.

When in Khaibar, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the Jewish woman who attempted to poison him, "Who will be in Hell?" she replied, "We will be in Hell for a short while, whereafter your people will occupy our places." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Go away from here. By Allāh! You people will never emerge from Hell, neither will we ever replace you there." [*Ahmad and Bukhari, v.2, p.860*]

Even though the Jews knew that a person who rejects any Prophet of Allāh is a infidel *(kāfir)*, they still rejected the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, even by their standards, they are destined for eternal punishment. However, they still claim that they will spend only a limited number of days in Hell. Their expectations are therefore fabricated and nonsensical. It is for this reason that Allāh says, *"Say, Have you taken a pledge with Allāh, which He cannot breach, or do you attribute to Allāh such statements that you have no knowledge of"*

Since their claims are baseless and without any substantiation from Allāh, they cannot possibly expect these hopes to materialise. The foolishness of the Jews is evident from this verse. They are prepared to suffer in Hell (even though it be for a short while), yet they do not want to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, knowing that he is Allāh's true messenger. None can bear to burn even in the fire of this world, how can they ever expect to endure the fire of Hell, which is sixty nine times more intense? (*According to Ahādīth in Bukhari and Muslim*).

Just as the Jews were deceived by their great expectations, many deviated sects in Islām also claim to be destined for Heaven *(Jannah)*, although their beliefs

are tantamount to infidelity *(Kufr)*. They make preposterous claims like saying that the Qur'ān has been adulterated or that Allāh has entered into the bodies of their religious Leaders (*Imām's*). Some even claim to follow another Prophet, yet they all entertain the false expectation of entering Heaven *(Jannah)*.

There are many people who believe that their lineage to a certain saint will guarantee their salvation in the Hereafter. They are also deceived by their hopes and fail to realise that only Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds according to the teachings of the Qur'ān and Ahādīth guarantee salvation. Even the Bani Isrā'īl will not be guaranteed salvation because of their relationship with the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام.

THE WISHFUL THINKING OF TODAY'S DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

Just like the Jews are deceived by their wishful thinking, the adherents of many Dīn's (*Religion's*) think that they will also attain salvation although their beliefs have no basis. Many even make the absurd claim that the Muslims will not attain salvation in the Hereafter.

بَلَىٰ مَن كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِۦ خَطِيٓـَٔتُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(81) However, the one who commits a sin and whose evil deeds have enveloped him, these are the ones who will be the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein forever. (82) Only, those who believe and do good deeds shall be the dwellers of Heaven (Jannah), wherein they will abide forever

WHO ARE THE DWELLERS OF THE FIRE AND WHO ARE THE DWELLERS OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*?

Allāh replies to the aforementioned statement of the Jews by identifying those destined for Heaven *(Jannah)* and those destined for Hell (Jahannam). Allāh says in the first of the two verses, *"However, the one who commits a sin and whose evil deeds have enveloped him, these are the ones who will be the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein forever"* Therefore, any person who falls into this category will be destined for eternal punishment in Hell, even though one may think that the punishment will be temporary.

On the other hand, *"Only those who believe* [in Allāh, in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and in the Qur'ān] *and do good deeds shall be the dwellers of Heaven (Jannah), wherein they will abide forever."*

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَـٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟

ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنكُمْ وَأَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

(83) When We took the pledge from the Bani Isrā'īl (instructing them that) "You will worship Allāh only, be kind towards parents, relatives, orphans and the poor, speak kindly to people, establish Salāh and pay Zakāh." Thereafter all besides a few of you reneged in aversion.

THE BREAKING OF THE PLEDGE BY THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL

The above verse mentions some of the injunctions contained in the Torah, regarding which the Bani Isrā'īl undertook a pledge to fulfil. However, besides a limited few, all of them broke the pledge. Allāh adds that they reneged *"in aversion,"* denoting that their nature was such that they were prone to renege. This was the practice of their forefathers as well.

The commands issued to them 'were that they should *"worship Allāh only, be kind towards parents, relatives, orphans and the poor, speak kindly to people, establish Salāh and pay Zakāh."* These commands have been issued to the previous ummahs followers and apply to the ummah followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as well.

Allāh says in Surah Nisā [*verse 36*]. *"Worship Allah, ascribe none as partner to Him and show' kindness to parents, relatives, orphans, the destitute, near neighbours, distant neighbours, close associates, travellers and those in your possession"*.

The commands to establish Salāh and pay Zakāh has been issued in many verses of the Qur'ān. The opening verses of Surah Al-Baqarah describe the pious people as those who establish Salāh and pay Zakāh. Thereafter, verses 43 and 110 also issue the same command to the Believers (*Mu'minīn*). The other Surahs of the Qur'ān also emphasise these two commands.

"speak kindly to people" This command is extremely vast. It entails speaking kindly to all types of people — including Muslims. Infidels *(kuffār)*, pious people and evildoers. The general nature of the word "kindly" implies all types of good advice, guidance, showing respect, being kind when demanding rights, etc. The verse also alludes to the Jews that they should disclose the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to the masses.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَآءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنفُسَكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمْ ثُمَّ
أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ
فَرِيقًا مِّنكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِهِمْ تَظَٰهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ وَإِن يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَٰرَىٰ
تُفَٰدُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ ۚ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ ۚ فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَن يَفْعَلُ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْىٌ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَشَدِّ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيَوٰةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿86﴾

(84) When We took a pledge from you (instructing that) you do not spill your blood and that you do not expel yourselves from your homes. Thereafter you agreed and you even bore testimony to it. (85) Then you were the ones who killed yourselves and expelled a group of your people from their homes, assisting against them with sin and transgression. If they came to you as prisoners, you would ransom them, whereas their expulsion was forbidden for you (in the first place). Do you believe in a part of the Book and reject a part? What can be the punishment for those of you who perpetrate this, except disgrace in this worldly life and on the Day of Resurrection (Qiyamah), they will be subjected to the severest of punishment? Allāh is not unaware of what you do. (86) These are the ones who have purchased the life of this world in place of the Hereafter. The punishment will neither be lessened for them nor will they be assisted.

A SPECIFIC TRANSGRESSION OF THE JEWS

The above verses make mention of yet another pledge that the Jews failed to fulfil. The Jews during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were also well aware of this pledge. The fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also had knowledge of this proves that he is Allāh's messenger, who was informed by none other than Allāh. However, the Jews still refused to acknowledge his apostleship.

It was previously mentioned that the Jewish tribes of the Banu Quraizah and the Banu Nadīr originally lived in Madinah. It was only afterwards that the idolatrous tribes of the Aws and Khazraj arrived from Yemen. Because the Arabs during those times could not live without fighting, the Aws and the Khazraj were always at loggerheads. When fighting broke out, the Banu Quraizah aligned themselves with the Aws, while the Banu Nadīr aligned themselves with the Khazraj. Whenever any members of these two Arab tribes were killed or expelled from their homes, the same would occur to their allied Jewish tribe.

Whenever any member of the two Jewish tribes was taken prisoner, both the Jewish tribes would be prepared to pay the ransom to free him. When they were asked about this, they replied that the Mosaic Shari'ah which they followed enjoined them to emancipate prisoners. However, the reason for a person becoming a prisoner and being expelled from his home was the fighting in which they wholeheartedly participated. This fighting against each other was also forbidden for them. However, when they are questioned about their participation in the battle against their brethren, they would reply that they were forced to assist their Arab allies.

Allāh then asks them, *'Do you believe in a part of the Book and reject apart?"* i.e. Do you only comply to the command to pay ransom, while ignoring the command not to kill each other and not to expel each other from their homes? They observed the laws selectively and omitted the rest.

Rejecting any of Allāh's laws would result in Disbelief *(Kufr)*, whereas

failure to practise any law (without rejecting it) will render one a sinner (not a disbeliever {*kāfir*}). However, failure to practise is akin to the behaviour of the Disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

'What can be the punishment for those of you who perpetrate this, except disgrace in this worldly life and on the Day of Resurrection (Qiyamah), they will be subjected to the severest of punishment" As a result, the Banu Nadīr were banished from Madinah to Khaibar, whereafter Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه banished them from there as well. The Bani Quraizah were all put to the sword.

"These are the ones who have purchased the life of this world in place of the Hereafter. The punishment will neither be lessened for them, nor will they be assisted" None will come to their assistance in the Hereafter.

A WARNING TO THOSE MUSLIMS WHO ARE NOT PREPARED TO PRACTISE ISLĀM IN ITS ENTIRETY.

The Muslims of today are emulating the behaviour of the Jews in practising only on those parts of Dīn *(Religion)* that appeal to them, while discarding the rest. Leaving aside the sinners, even those who appear to be pious restrict Islām to only a few deeds like Salāh, Zakāh, fasting, etc.

They fail to comply with the detailed injunctions of Islām pertaining to business transactions, employment in Prohibited *(harām)* institutions, depriving women and orphans from their inheritance, adopting Disbelievers *(kuffār)* approaches to marriages, funerals, births, etc. There are also those who perform hajj and pay Zakāh, yet, when the penal code of Islām is discussed, they oppose its enforcement. May Allāh guide us all. Āmīn.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ بِٱلرُّسُلِ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ
ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ ۗ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌۢ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰٓ أَنفُسُكُمُ
ٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

(87) Undoubtedly We gave the Book to Mūsa and successively sent messengers after him. We gave clear signs to Isa, the son of Maryam and bolstered him with the Ruhul Qudus. Every time a messenger comes to you with what does not appeal to your fancy, you behaved arrogantly. So you denied a party and kill another."

THE JEWS REJECTED SOME PROPHETS عليهم السلام *(ANBIYA)* AND ASSASSINATED OTHERS.

Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly We gave the Book* (the Torah) *to Mūsa and successively sent messengers after him. We gave clear signs* (miracles) *to Isa, the son of Maryam* [which substantiated his claim to Risālat (prophethood)]" Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام was granted the ability to cure lepers and blind people; he raised the dead and even blew life into birds that he fashioned from clay.

Allāh says that He also *"bolstered him with the Ruhul Qudus.'* i.e. Allāh placed Jibrīl عليه السلام at Sayyidina Isa's عليه السلام service. In Surah Āl Imrān, Allāh quotes Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام as saying to his people, *'I confirm that which was before me of the Torah, and I make lawful for you some of that which was forbidden unto you and I come to you with a sign (miracles) from your Lord. So fear Allāh and obey me."* [*verse 50*]

The Jews opposed Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام because his Dīn *(Religion)* cancelled some of the laws contained in the Torah and the Mosaic Shari'ah. They harassed him endlessly and even plotted to kill him. However, Allāh raised him to the heavens before they could complete their plan. In the same way, they opposed many of the other Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام because the laws brought by these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام did not appeal to them. Allāh says, *"Every time a messenger comes to you with what does not appeal to your fancy, you behaved arrogantly. So you denied a party of the Prophets (Anbiya)* عليهم السلام] *and kill another."*

Ibn Kathir writes that Allāh uses the present and future tenses (both of which are combined in a single word in Arabic) when saying that they kill another group of Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام . This is so because even when the Qur'ān was being revealed, they attempted to assassinate the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. For example, a Jewess attempted to poison the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم when he was at Khaibar. "Mishkāt" (*p. 548*) reports that the effect of this poison finally led to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم demise.

The above verse denotes that many Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام were sent between Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام. Some names [like Sayyidina Daw'ūd عليه السلام and Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام] have been mentioned in the Qur'ān, while others are not mentioned. No authentic hadith mentions these. A narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, reported in" Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1, p.86*) mentions a few names like Sayyidina Shamweel, Hizqīl, etc. As Muslims, we should believe in all these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام.

With regard to the support rendered by Jibr'īl عليه السلام, Allāma Nasafi رحمة الله عليه says that Jibr'īl عليه السلام lifted Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام to the heavens when the Jews tried to kill him. The "Tafsīr Jalālain" mentions that Jibr'īl عليه السلام always remained with Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام, protecting him whenever necessary.

Jibr'īl عليه السلام is often referred to as the "Ruhul Qudus" in the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth. Allāh says in Surah Nahl (*verse 102*), "Say, *The Ruhul Qudus has brought it (the Qur'ān) from your Lord."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once prayed to Allāh in favour of Sayyidina Hassān bin Thābit رضى الله عنه saying. *"Oh Allāh! Assist him through the Ruhul Qudus."* [*Muslim, v.2 p.300*]

وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَل لَّعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

(88) They say, "Our hearts are covered." Nay, but, Allāh has cursed them because of their disbelief, so only a few of them believe.

ALLĀH REFUTES THE CLAIM OF THE JEWS THAT THEIR HEARTS ARE COVERED

The Jews regarded their rejection of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a source of pride. They boastfully said, *"Our hearts are covered,"* meaning that nothing can infiuence their hearts and change them. However, the fact of the matter is that Allāh has cursed them because of their obstinacy and arrogance in the face of the truth.

The cover that envelopes their hearts is nothing but the veil of deprivation, which Allāh has set upon them. Their disbelief has become so entrenched in their hearts that it prevents everything else from entering.

"So only a few of them believe." This refers to those of them who truly believe in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the Hereafter. They accept his instruction to believe in all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام after him. Disbelieving in any one of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام is tantamount to disbelieving in all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام. A little belief in the Hereafter will be of no avail in the Hereafter in comparison to their disbelief in all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام.

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ كِتَٰبٌ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مَّا عَرَفُوا۟ كَفَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۚ فَلَعْنَةُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾ بِئْسَمَا ٱشْتَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَنفُسَهُمْ أَن يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بَغْيًا أَن يُنَزِّلَ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ فَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ عَلَىٰ غَضَبٍ ۚ وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

(89) When a Book from Allāh comes to them confirming that which is with them (although they used to seek victory over the disbelievers before this) when what they recognise comes to them, they deny it. Allāh's curse is on the disbelievers. (90) Evil is that for which they have sold their souls; that they disbelieve in what Allāh has revealed, jealous of the fact that Allāh confers His grace upon whoever of His bondmen He chooses. So they earned wrath upon wrath. For the disbelievers, there shall be a humiliating punishment

THE JEWS INTENTIONALLY REFUSED TO ACCEPT ISLĀM BECAUSE OF THEIR OBSTINACY

The Jews arrived in Madinah for the sole purpose of meeting the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whom they believed to be the final Prophet of Allāh. When they used to fight the idolatrous Arab tribes, they used to tell them that they would soon pledge their allegiance to the final messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, under whose command they would annihilate their enemies like how the Ād destroyed their enemies.

Certain narrations report that the Jews used to make the following pray

(du'ā) to Allāh: Oh Allāh! Send the Prophet who is mentioned in our scripture, so that we may fight the Arabian Polytheists with him.'

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, the Jews recognized him to be the final Prophet. They even witnessed his many miracles, yet they denied his apostleship. The Aws and the Khazraj reminded the Jews about what they used to say about the final Prophet, thereby encouraging them to accept Islām. However, they responded by saying that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the Prophet they awaited because he is not a Jew like them.

The fact of the matter is that they were envious that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was amongst the Arabs and not from the Jews. It is for this reason that the above verse rebukes them and announces Allāh's curse on them. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.824*]

The Qur'ān is described as a book that confirms the Torah. This has been mentioned in the verse to indicate to the Jews that they really have no reason for rejecting the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān. If the Qur'ān refuted Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام or the Torah, then the Jews may have been justified in rejecting it. However, the Qur'ān enjoins belief in all the previous Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and divine scriptures.

"that they disbelieve in what Allāh has revealed, jealous of the fact that Allāh confers His grace upon whoever of His bondmen He chooses." Allāh reserves the right to bestow the grace of Risālat (prophethood) to whomever He wills. None can question Allāh's decision. However, the Jews envied the fact that the Arabs received this honour.

The Jews disbelieved in Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and questioned Allāh's decision in making him a Prophet. Thereafter, they also rejected the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān, causing them to earn *"wrath upon wrath."* Because of this double rejection, they will suffer a *"humiliating punishment"* in the Hereafter.

"Evil is that for which they have sold their souls." Explaining this verse, the author of Ruhul Ma'āni writes that the Disbelievers *(kuffār)* paid with their souls to earn the commodity of disbelief *(Kufr)*. This means that they destroyed their own souls by subjecting themselves to the eternal punishment of the Hereafter.

Some commentators have interpreted the verse in its original meaning. They say that the verse means that the Jews think that they have bought their souls by adhering to their ways, thereby freeing themselves from Hell. However, their deal is riddled with evil because the price of Disbelief *(Kufr)* which they paid will cause them detriment in both worlds. They will only be able to free themselves from Hell by believing in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا نُؤْمِنُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا

وَرَآءَهُۥ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنۢبِيَآءَ ٱللَّهِ مِن قَبْلُ إِن كُنتُم

مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُم مُّوسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذْتُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَأَنتُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

(91) When they are told, "Believe in what Allāh has revealed," they say, "We believe in what was revealed to us." They disbelieve in whatever is after that, whereas it is the truth, which confirms what is with them,. Say, "Why did you slay Allāh 's messengers before if you were believers?" (92) Verily, Mūsa came to you with clear signs, whereafter you took to worship the calf after him: as oppressors.

THE JEWS ARE QUESTIONED ABOUT THEIR DECLARATION THAT THEY WILL NOT BELIEVE IN ANYTHING BESIDES THE TORAH

Allāh states that the Jews reject the Qur'ān even though the Qur'ān confirms whatever is in their Torah. Therefore, rejecting the Qur'ān is tantamount to rejecting the Torah itself. The Torah did not forbid them from believing in other Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and other scriptures. In fact, the Torah made mention of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم advent and even described him.

By denying the Risālat (prophethood) of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم they actually denied the Torah which they claimed to follow. Allāh also asks them. *'Why did you' slay Allāh's messengers before if you were believers* (in the Torah as you claim)?' Even the Torah declares assassination of a Prophet to be an act of disbelief *(Kufr)*. The fact that the earlier Jews killed many Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and that their successors approved of their behaviour show that neither party actually believed in the Torah as they claimed.

Even more strange is that fact that the Jews killed those Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام who propagated the Torah and who followed the teachings of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام without any alteration. The fact that the Jews killed them despite their being from the Bani Isrā'il shows that the Jews never intended to follow the Torah, but rather to follow their whims and carnal pleasures.

"*Verily, Mūsa came to you with clear signs* (i.e. miracles to prove his Risālat (prophethood)) Consequently, they all recited "*Lā Ilāha IllAllāh*" as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had instructed. However, when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام went to Mount Tūr, they began worshipping the calf which was oppressive to their own souls. Despite possessing knowledge of the evil deeds of their forebears, later Jews still revered them and emulated their ways. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.127*]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ ٱلطُّورَ خُذُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأُشْرِبُوا۟ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِهِۦٓ إِيمَٰنُكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

(93) When We took a pledge from you And raised Mount Tūr above you (saying)

"Hold fast to what We have given you and listen." They said, "We hear and we disobey." Due to their disbelief, the calf was absorbed into their hearts. Say, "Evil indeed is that which your belief commands you if you are believers."

A PLEDGE IS TAKEN FROM THE JEWS AND THE LOVE OF THE CALF IS SOAKED INTO THEIR HEARTS

Surah Al-Baqarah previously mentioned how Allāh uprooted Mount Tūr and made it hover over the heads of the Jews because they refused to abide by the pledge that they had made. They were told, *"Hold fast to what We have given you and listen."* i.e. Listen with the ears of the heart so that you may practise upon the truth.

In reply to this command they said, *"We hear and we disobey."* Some commentators have mentioned that at first they reluctantly conceded to hear the command, but they later violated the command.

"Due to their disbelief the calf was absorbed into their hearts." Just as water is absorbed into something, the love of the calf became an inseparable part of their psyche.

"Say, 'Evil indeed is that which your belief commands you if you are believers." The Jews claimed to be believers, yet they perpetrated acts of infidelity *(Kufr)* and disbelief. They are asked the above question because it appears that their belief is prompting them to do what they do. Belief is supposed to prompt one to do good deeds and cannot make a person carry out an act as vile as idol worship. Therefore, it is obvious that they are bereft of true belief *(Imān)*.

Note: Although the Qur'ān has already mentioned that the Jews repented for worshipping the calf, the fact that their hearts absorbed it proves that many of them did not repent sincerely. Even when the mountain was hovering above their heads, they merely conceded to fulfilling the pledge for fear of their lives.

قُلْ إِن كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِندَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّن دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا
الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (94) وَلَن يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالظَّالِمِينَ (95) وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَىٰ حَيَاةٍ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۚ يَوَدُّ
أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحْزِحِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَن يُعَمَّرَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ (96)

(94) Say, "If the home of the Hereafter is reserved exclusively for you and none else, then wish for death if you are truthful." (95) "They shall never ever wish for death because of the deeds that their hands have sent ahead. Allāh has perfect knowledge about the oppressors" (96) "You will find them to be the most greedy of all people for life; even more than the idolaters. Each of them wishes that he is granted a life of a thousand years. Even the fact that he is granted this life would not save him from punishment. Allāh is Ever Watchful over what they do."

THE JEWS ARE CHALLENGED TO WISH FOR DEATH

One of the claims that the Jews made was that Heaven *(Jannah)* was exclusively reserved for them. The verse challenges them to *"mubāhala," (actual imprecation to prove truth of one's point)* wherein each party prays to Allāh to give death to whichever party is wrong. When the challenge was put to the Jews during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they declined to accept.

The above interpretation has been rendered by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه . He adds that the Jews would have immediately perished if they had accepted the challenge. Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه has reported a similar statement from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, adding that all their possessions would also have been destroyed with them.

"They shall never ever wish for death because of the deeds that their hands have sent ahead. Allāh has perfect knowledge about the oppressors." Allāh will punish them for their sins.

Allāh then says that the Jews will never wish for death because *"You will find them to be the most greedy of all people for life; even more than the idolaters. Each of them wishes that he is granted a life of a thousand years. Even the fact that he is granted this life would not save him from punishment. Allāh is Ever, Watchful over what they do"* Immediately upon their deaths they will face Allāh's punishment, just as Satan *(Iblīs)* will suffer despite his lengthy life of thousands of years.

Allāh says in Surah Jumu'ah (*verse 8*), 'Say, *Verily you will meet with death, from which you so flee. then you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, when He will inform you of what you used to do."*

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه says that the interpretation of this verse as a challenge to *"mubāhala"* is the most accurate interpretation. The Jews were challenged to *mubāhala* just as the Christians of Najrān were challenged to the same (as mentioned in verse 61 of Surah Āl Imrān, where Allāh says, *"Whoever disputes with you concerning this after the knowledge has came to you, then Say to them, Come! We shall Summon your sons and our sons, your wives and our wives, yourselves and ourselves. Then we shall collectively supplicate sincerely (to Allāh) to invoke His curse upon the liars"*).

Certain commentators say that the above verse challenges them to wish for death so that they could enjoy the bounties they claim for themselves. This interpretation does not make mention of mubāhala. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that this interpretation is not conclusive in sealing the mouths of the Jews because they will then tell the Muslims also to wish for death while hail and healthy, which no person normally does.

قُلْ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُۥ نَزَّلَهُۥ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (97) مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَىٰلَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ (98)

(97) Say, "Whoever is an enemy of Jibr'īl, then, by Allāh's command, he has brought to your heart the Qur'ān which is a confirmation to what was before it, a guidance and a bearer of glad tidings for the believers." (98) Whoever is an enemy of Allāh, His angels, His messengers, Jibr'īl and Mikā'īl, then Allāh is certainly an enemy of the disbelievers.

THE HERETICAL STATEMENT OF THE JEWS THAT JIBR'ĪL عليه السلام IS THEIR ENEMY

When the Jews learned that Jibr'īl عليه السلام was bringing revelation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they said, "He is our enemy because he brings stringent laws. We will not believe in a book that is brought by Jibr'īl, who also inflicts punishment. If Mikā'īl were to bring the revelation, we would accept it because he also brings Allāh 's mercy and rains."

The Jews once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to furnish answers to certain questions, claiming that they would accept him as Allāh's messenger if the replies were appropriate. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied to all their questions, which they accepted. However, when it was mentioned that Jibr'īl عليه السلام brings revelation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they claimed that he was their enemy. They said that they will not believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as long as Jibr'īl عليه السلام brings revelation to him. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.120*]

Allāh declares. *'Say, 'Whoever is an enemy of Jibr'īl, then, by' Allāh's command, he has brought to your heart the Qur'ān, which is a confirmation to what was before it, a guidance and a bearer of glad tidings for the believers. Whoever is an enemy of Allāh, His angels, His messengers, Jibr'īl and Mikā'īl, then Allāh is certainly an enemy of the disbelievers."*

Since Jibr'īl عليه السلام only conveys what Allāh reveals, the person who is an enemy to him is actually and enemy of Allāh. The Jews were foolish to object to Jibr'īl عليه السلام being an envoy of Allāh to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because the personality of an envoy has no bearing on the nature of the message. He was bringing the injunctions of Allāh which apply to all mankind.

By making mention of all messengers and angels in general together with the mention of Sayyidina Jibr'īl and Mikā'īl عليهم السلام, the message is driven home that enmity towards any one of Allāh's envoys, be they man or angel, will attract Allāh's wrath. Therefore, enmity towards one angel amounts to enmity towards all the angels. No person can claim to detest one angel, while loving another.

وَلَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ ۖ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ أَوَكُلَّمَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ عَهْدًا نَّبَذَهُۥ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

(99) We have certainly revealed clear signs to you. Only the disobedient disbelieve therein. (100) Whenever they make a covenant, will a party of them discard it? But most of them do not believe.

ONLY THE DISOBEDIENT WILL REJECT CLEAR SIGNS

'Durrul Manthūr' (*v.1, p.94*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه that the Jew, Ibn Suriya, said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, 'Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! Neither have you brought us anything that we recognise, nor did you show us any signs which would make us follow you.' Allāh revealed the above verse in refutation of this statement.

Allāh says, *"Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم We have certainly revealed clear signs to you. Only the disobedient disbelieve therein."* Amongst these was the secret discussions of the Jews and the details of their forefathers, which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could have learnt about only from Allāh. This is enough for any person who is level minded and not blinded by hatred and jealousy.

A GROUP AMONGST THE JEWS ALWAYS BREACH THE PLEDGES THEY MAKE

Ibn Kathīr reports that the Jews refuted that they made any covenant when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reminded them of the covenant that they undertook to believe in his apostleship. One of them, a person called Mālik bin Saif said, "I swear by Allāh that no covenant was taken from us with regard to Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم." It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"Whenever they make a covenant, will a party of them discard it?"* Violating covenants had become second nature to them.

The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* writes that the verse consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that he should not be distressed about their behaviour because they have always been doing so. [*v.1, p.335*] Thereafter Allāh says, *"But most of them do not believe."* Of course, there were many who did become Muslims.

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿101﴾

(101) When a messenger comes to them from Allāh, confirming that which is with them, a party of those given the Book renege. They cast the Book of Allāh, behind their backs as if they have no knowledge.

THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK CAST THE BOOK BEHIND THEIR BACKS

Allāh mentions that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)* with the Qur'ān, they refused to believe in either, even though both confirmed the Torah. They even discarded the Torah by polluting it with their own concocted beliefs and ideologies. In addition to this, they concealed the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from the masses when they were convinced of his apostleship. [*Ruhul Ma'āni v.1, p.336*]

وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ مَا تَتْلُوا۟ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِنَّ

ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ ٱلسِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَٰرُوتَ وَمَٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۖ
فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِۦ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا هُم بِضَآرِّينَ بِهِۦ مِنْ
أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا۟ لَمَنِ
ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ لَوْ
كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ (102) وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ ۖ
لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ (103)

(102) They follow what the Satan's (Shayātīn) recited during the reign of Sulaymān. Sulaymān never disbelieved, but the Satan's (Shayātīn) disbelieved by teaching black magic to the people. They also followed what was revealed to the two angels Hārūt and Mārūt in Babylon. They never taught anyone without telling them, "We are merely a test, so do not disbelieve." So they learnt from the two of them such things whereby they could split a man from his wife. They can never harm anyone therewith without Allāh 's command. They learnt things that harmed them, and did them, no good. Indeed, they knew that there is no share in the Hereafter for the one who purchased it. Evil indeed is the price for which they have sold their souls. If only they knew." (103) "If only they believed and adopted piety (taqwa), then: the reward with Allāh is best for them, if only they knew."

BLACK MAGIC WAS RIFE IN BABYLON AND THE JEWS WERE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN IT

The trade of magic is an old one. Although everything occurs by Allāh's will, magic is one of the causes used to affect changes. Thinking them to be insane, people said that Sayyidina Hūd and Sālih عليهم السلام were bewitched (i.e. affected by black magic).

The incident between Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the magicians is famous. This notorious profession of magic prevailed during the time of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام as well, and even extended to the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Bukhari (*v.2, p.858*), reports how a Jew cast a spell over the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The evil practice is just as rife today.

Allāh says that the Jews *"follow what the Satan's (Shayātīn) recited during the reign of Sulaymān* (i.e. they dabbled in the practice of black magic)." Commentators have narrated that the *Satan's (Shayātīn)* buried some amulets and incantations beneath Sayyidina Sulaymān's عليه السلام throne. When he passed away, they dug up these items and spread the word that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was never a Prophet, but he reigned over the creation because of the magical talent that he wielded.

Although the learned scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl never fell for this lie, the

masses began to learn and teach magic, considering it to be the knowledge of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. In this manner, they discarded Allāh's scripture.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spoke about Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام being a Prophet of Allāh, the Jews said, "Muhammad says that Sulaymān, the son of Daw'ūd, was a Prophet, whereas he was nothing but a magician." To exonerate Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام of any suspicion, Allāh revealed the verse declaring, *"Sulaymān never disbelieved* (by practicing magic), *but the Satan's (Shayātīn) disbelieved by teaching black magic to the people."*[*Qurtubi and Ibn Kathīr*]

THE TEST BY MEANS OF HĀRŪT AND MĀRŪT

"They also followed what was revealed to the two angels Hārūt and Mārūt in Babylon." Magic was extremely popular in Babylon. Impressed by the feats of magicians, people considered them to be blessed and venerable men. To expose the harm and evil of magic, Allāh sent two angels named Hārūt and Mārūt to Babylon. They were to show people the clear distinction between magic and miracles. They were also a test for people, to discern those who would want to pursue evil from those who abstained there from.

Whenever people would come to them to learn magic, they would first tell them, *"We are merely a test, so do not disbelieve.'* i.e. Do not forsake your Dīn's (Religion's) by learning this evil science. They advised people to learn magic with good intentions, otherwise they should rather not bother with it. They taught it only to those who pledged not to utilise the knowledge, for evil aims. Of course, many did not conform to the conditions of their pledge.

Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه writes that a similar example would be that of a person who approaches a practising religious scholar to teach him modern and ancient philosophy so that he can safeguard himself from the doubts in Belief *(Imān)* expressed by this science. He also intends to learn it so that he can reply to the objections raised by other philosophers. The religious scholar then warns him against using the knowledge to attack the beliefs of Islam. When the person pledges not to do so, the scholar teaches him. However, if the person fails to abide by the terms of the pledge, the scholar cannot be held responsible. [*Bayānul Qur'ān*]

SOME EFFECTS OF BLACK MAGIC

"So they learnt from the two of them such things whereby they could split a man from his wife." One of the many ill effects of black magic is that it can be used to split a loving couple. Only this effect is mentioned because it is one of the most detestable deeds in Allāh's sight.

Sayyidina Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Verily, Satan (Iblis) places his throne on water. From there, he dispatches his followers to cause corruption among people.* The closest to him will be the one who causes the most strife and harm. (Thereafter, they all report back to him). Whenever one of them reports their activity to him, he replies, 'You achieved nothing.' Finally, one of them comes to him saying, 'I pursued a person to such an extent that I eventually caused him to be separated from his wife.' Thereupon Iblis calls him closer saying, 'You have truly achieved something.'

Sayyidina A'mash رحمة الله عليه, one of the narrators of the hadith, reports that he recalls the fact that Satan *(Iblis)* embraces the devil *(Shaytān)* who splits a couple. [*Muslim, v.2,, p.376*]

MAGIC CAN HAVE AN EFFECT ONLY WITH ALLĀH'S COMMAND

Allāh says that those who dabble with black magic *"can never harm anyone therewith* (with their magical spells) *without Allāh 's command. "* Everything happens only with Allāh's command, but because people are so accustomed to witnessing the effects of this, they have grown immune to it. Some examples are:

Fire can burn only with Allāh's command. Without Allāh's command it cannot burn, like how it could not burn Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام.

A knife cannot cut without Allāh's command, like how it could not cut the throat of Sayyidina Ismā'īl عليه السلام.

Food cannot satisfy a person even though he eats a large amount —like people suffering from certain diseases.

Water can quench thirst only with Allāh's command, without which people with certain diseases cannot slake their thirst.

Because all these things are visible to the man, he regards them as a means to reach certain ends. Contrary to these things, the means by which magic has an effect are invisible. It is for this reason that people are astonished at its effects. However, even these hidden means are useless without Allāh's command. Therefore, only ignorant people will be impressed by the deeds of magicians and the effects of mesmerism.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was challenged by the magicians, he told them that their feats were mere acts of magic which Allāh could nullify. Surah Falaq and Nās can nullify the spells of the most skilled magicians.

THE HIDDEN CAUSES OF BLACK MAGIC

One of the many ways in which magic works is with the assistance of the *Satan's (Shayātīn)*. People secure the assistance of these *Satan's (Shayātīn)* by pleasing them. This is achieved by uttering incantations that contain words of disbelief *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*, and also contain praises for the *Satan's (Shayātīn)*. They may also secure their assistance by performing deeds pleasing to them, like murdering a person and using his blood or some organ. They may also be required to constantly remain in a state of impurity or have impurities on their person. It is for these reasons that the most accomplished magicians are those who are the most filthy and impure, and who flee furthest from the mention of Allāh's name.

The spells of female magicians are therefore most effective when they cast them while menstruating. Just as the angels assist pious and pure people who perform good deeds, the *Satan's (Shayātīn)* assist sinful and impure people whose every deed is evil. This is so because assistance can be sought only when a likeness exists between the seeker of assistance and the assistant. [*Ruhul Ma'āni, v.1, p.338*]

THE MAGIC PRACTISED BY PHARAOH'S *(FIR'AUN)* MAGICIANS

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has quoted eight types of magic from Sayyidina Abu Abdullah Rāzi رحمة الله عليه. He has included in these types such feats that are performed by sleight of hand, mesmerism, hypnosis and the use of certain chemicals. An example of mesmerism is explained by the way it seems to a person travelling by train that the ground is moving with him. This was the type of practice that Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun)* magicians adopted.

Allāh says in verse 66 of Surah TāHā. *"Then their* (the magicians) *ropes and their staffs suddenly seemed to appear like slithering snakes to him* [*Sayyidina Mūsa* عليه السلام] *on account of their magic"*

Verse 116 of Surah Arāf remis, *"they mesmerised the peoples' eyes, frightened them and displayed wonderful magic."*

These verses prove that the 'magic' during the time of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was nothing more than mesmerism. However, the effect was so vivid that even Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام felt some natural fear. Verse 67 of Surah TāHā reads, *"So Mūsa sensed a bit of fear in his heart"* thereupon Allāh told him, *"Do not fear" You shall definitely remain high. Throw down what is in your right hand and it will devour what they have conjured. They have merely contrived the plot of a magician, and a magician will never succeed wherever he goes"*. [*verses 68 and 69*]

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAGIC AND MIRACLES OF PROPHETS عليه السلام *(MUJIZĀT)*

As mentioned earlier, magic hinges on hidden means to cause the desired effect. On the other hand, miracles displayed by the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام {called unnecessary (*Mu'jizāt*)} proceed directly from Allāh, without any hidden or visible means. The miracles of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام are too numerous to mention. Amongst these is the cooling of the fire for Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام, the staff of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام which became a serpent and which caused the sea to split open for the Bani Isrā'īl.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also performed many miracles. A single handful of sand that he threw temporarily blinded the entire Polytheists army, water flowed from between his fingers and hundreds of people ate from a meagre amount of food that he served.

Magic can also be distinguished from miracles *(Mu'jizāt)* by scrutinising the person involved. Magic is associated with filthy, impure and sinful people, while the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام were pious, upright and pure.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that Allāh will never allow any magician to reproduce a miracle displayed by any of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام, like splitting the sea, raising the dead, making inanimate objects talk, etc. He has also written that another difference between a miracle and magic is that a miracle can only take place at the hands of a person who is a Prophet of Allāh. No supernatural act can issue forth from a person claiming to be a Prophet when he is not one. Miracles are also accompanied by a challenge for any person to beat the feat. Allāh has maintained this system to disgrace any false claimant to Risālat (prophethood). [*v.1, p.339*]

After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the false claimants to Risālat (prophethood) have managed only to mesmerise people at the most. They can do no more. No magician can ever issue the challenge that the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام did when performing a miracle. History bears testimony to the fact that no person has ever reproduced a miracle of any Prophet of Allāh, nor has any person nullified any miracle.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAGIC AND THE MIRACLES OF PIOUS PEOPLE *(KARĀMĀT)*.

The supernatural feats performed by pious people who are not Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام are called Karāmāt. Many pious people of the ummah followers have displayed Karāmāt. These Karāmāt neither draw them closer to Allāh nor do they increase their status. The pious people are sometimes unaware of their own Karāmāt. It is for this reason that many notable saints do not even attach importance to these.

To differentiate between Karāmāt and magic, the person involved should also be scrutinised. Only Allāh's pious servants will display Karāmāt. They are people who are constantly engaged in Allāh's worship, adhere to the Shari'ah and are distant from filth and impurity.

A supernatural act stemming from a person whose behaviour is contrary to this and more in conformance to the behaviour of Satan *(Shaytān)* will not be regarded as a Karāmah (*singular of Karāmāt*).

PRACTISING MAGIC IS A SIN AS WELL AS AN ACT OF INFIDELITY *(KUFR)*

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that if any form of magic requires incantations containing words of infidelity *(Kufr)*, then it will be regarded as infidelity *(Kufr)* e.g. seeking assistance from the *Satan's (Shayātīn)* or the stars. The status of infidelity *(Kufr)* will apply even though the magic is not used to harm anyone but to benefit others.

However, when such words are not used but the magic is used to harm others, it will be regarded as a sin. If none is hurt thereby, it will not be called magic. However, if the words used are not clearly understood, it should be refrained from. The same applies to all other methods of securing cure or assistance (even what is called Ta'wīz/ charm). amulet.

"They learnt things that harmed them and did them no good." Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه interprets this verse to mean that they caused harm to themselves in the Hereafter although they may have achieved some sort of benefit through magic in this world. Other commentators say that the harm of magic will even overtake the magician in this world. One of the ways is that they stand to face severe punishment if convicted of magic by an Islamic court.

Commenting on the phrase *"and did them no good'*, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that black magic can only auger harm and destruction for a person because no good can come of it. It is just like certain harmful things, like poisons which are extremely harmful can contain a little benefit, so too a person practising black magic can never benefit anyone because no real good can be

derived from it. Learning the science is detrimental to one's existence in both the worlds.

Even though a limited amount of good can be had from magic in perhaps saving a Muslim from harm, it has been declared bereft of good because such cases of benefit are extremely rare. Black magic is almost always used to harm others.

It also has a detrimental effect on the magician himself or herself. No magician has ever been known to prosper in this world, nor have any of them become leaders. One will notice that these people always live in filth and squalor, earning only the little that people pay them to cast spells on others Of course, total destruction awaits them in the Hereafter.

'Indeed, they' knew that there is no share in the Hereafter for the one who purchased it. Evil indeed is the price for which they have sold their souls. If only they knew." They will earn the terrible tortures of the Hereafter in exchange for the measly gains of this world.

Although there seems to be a contradiction of terms between *"Indeed they knew"* and *"if only they knew,"* there is really no contradiction. Practising something despite possessing the knowledge that it is detrimental is just like having no knowledge at all. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" interprets *"If only they knew"* to mean: 'Although they knew that they were facing terrible consequences in the Hereafter, if only they knew exactly what these consequences were, they would certainly abstain.'

If only they believed {in all of Allāh's Prophets *(Anbiya)*} and adopted piety *(taqwa)* (by abstaining from all sin), then the reward with Allāh is best for them if only they knew. Even the smallest reward of the Hereafter is better than all the things of this world because it is everlasting.

"Rūhul Ma'āni" mentions that, according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه, persons found guilty of practising black magic must be executed. Their lives will not be spared even if they repent and promise never to repeat the deed. [*v.1, p.339*]

Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه writes that the man who practises that black magic which falls under the category of infidelity *(Kufr)* will be executed because he has become a infidel *(kāfir)*. However, if a woman is found guilty of black magic she will not be executed because female apostates are also not executed (she will be imprisoned for life). If a person is found guilty of such black magic that is not classified as infidelity *(Kufr)*, then she will not be executed because of the magic. However, if the magic caused anything serious like someone's death, illness or separation from a spouse, then the magician (male or female) will be executed because she has been instrumental in causing strife to reign on earth.

A Sahābi by the name of Sayyidina Jundub bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه once saw a person demonstrate how he could decapitate a person and then replace his head, causing him to come back to life. Onlookers were greatly astonished and applauded him for being able to raise the dead. Sayyidina Jundub رضی الله عنه drew his sword and executed the magician, telling the people, "If he can raise the dead, he would raise himself as well." the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thereafter

said about Sayyidina Jundub رضى الله عنه, "He struck such a blow with his sword whereby he assumed the status of an entire ummah." [*Al Isabah, v.1, p.250*]

It was necessary to execute the person because his action would lead to great corruption by causing people to believe that he could actually raise the dead.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports that a person once came to Sayyidina Walīd bin Aqba رضى الله عنه who was the governor of Iraq. The person walked on a string, entered into a donkey's body from its tail and then emerged from it's mouth. Sayyidina Jundub رضى الله عنه executed the person. It was about Sayyidina Jundub رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, said "There will be a person from my ummah called Jundub. He will strike a blow with his sword whereby falsehood will be distinguished from truth." [*v.2,, p.47*]

Ruling: It is not permissible to use the words of the Qur'ān and Ahādīth for any practice that causes harm to others e.g. to recite certain Surahs, etc or make a charm? To harm anyone, even though Allāh's names are used.

Ruling: Amulets made by people who are assisted by *Satan's (Shayātīn)* will also be regarded as magic and cannot be used. It is also not permissible to use these amulets when the source is doubtful.

Note: An incident is commonly reported about how Hārūt and Mārūt were sent to earth after human passions were instilled in them. On earth, they fell in love with a woman called Zahra whom they tried to seduce. She asked them to inform her of the Ismul A'zam (a great name of Allāh by which all supplications are accepted). When they informed her, she immediately ascended to the heavens and became a star.

Thereafter, Allāh gave them the option of suffering punishment in this world or in the Hereafter. When they opted for worldly punishment, they were suspended up side down in a well of Babylon, where they will be punished till day of resurrection *(Qiyamah)*. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه, "Rūhul Ma'āni" and Allāma Ibn Jawzi رحمة الله عليه have all narrated this incident. However, the authenticity of this narration has been questioned.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَقُولُوا۟ رَٰعِنَا وَقُولُوا۟ ٱنظُرْنَا وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ ۗ وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿104﴾

(104) O you who believe, do not say, "Rā'inā," but say, "Unzurna" and hearken. A painful punishment is reserved for the disbelievers.

THE MISCHIEF OF THE JEWS AND PROHIBITION FROM SAYING "RĀ'INĀ."

Part of the insolence displayed by the Jews was that they used to tell the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Rā'inā." This word may be translated in both the Arabic and the Hebrew languages. In Arabic it would mean, "Consider us," whereas it is a curse in Hebrews. When addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم, they intended the Hebrew meaning of the word, but (because of the Arabic meaning of the word). they made it appear to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the other Muslims that they were actually requesting the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم attention.

Allāh says in verse 46 of Surah Nisā, *"Some of the Jews alter words from their context and say, We hear and we disobey' and Listen in a manner that you do not listen! Distorting with their tongues and taunting the Dīn (Religion) they say 'Rā'inā. ' if only they said, We hear and we obey!' Do listen!' and Do grant us consideration,' it would have been better for them, and more ethical, However, Allāh has cursed them because of their disbelief so that only a few of them, believe."*

According to the Arabic language, the companions of Prophet (Sahabah) رضى الله عنهم used to say, "Rā'inā, Yā Muhammad." ["Look to us, Oh Muhammad the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم]. Sayyidina Sa'd bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه who understood the Hebrew language, noticed the Jews laughing amongst themselves whenever they said, "Rā'inā, Yā Muhammad." He warned them never to use those words again, otherwise he would kill them. When they objected that the Muslims also used these words, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Oh you who believe, do not say, 'Rā'inā' but say Unzurna and hearken. A painful punishment is reserved for the disbelievers."* [*Ma'alimut Tanzīl, v.1, p. 102*]

Bayānul Qur'ān mentions that this verse teaches Muslims to abstain from any permissible deed if the possibility exists that the deed could lead to a sin. A Muslim scholar will therefore not be permitted to perform any permissible act, which another person may misconstrue, leading him to fall into sin when trying to do the same. Of course, this will only apply to acts that are not compulsory. if an act is compulsory, it will have to be carried out even though people may misconstrue it.

THE LAWS DERIVED FROM THE PROHIBITION OF SAYING "RĀ'INĀ"

Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ahkāmul Qur'ān' that any word which could have either a good or a bad meaning must not be used unless additional words are added to restrict the meaning to the good one. It is also learnt that it is not permissible to use any words that will cause people to laugh and mock.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه states that the verse prohibits Muslims from emulating the words and deeds of the infidels *(kuffār)*. Thereafter, he quotes a hadith from the "Musnad of Ahmad" in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says, "The one who emulates a nation is from them." Therefore, a Muslim must not imitate the dressing. acts of devotion, mannerisms, words and actions of the infidels *(kuffār)*. [*v.2, p. 148*]

Many Ahādīth have strictly prohibited Muslims from using words that have an evil or inappropriate meaning. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has prohibited Muslims from calling anyone 'Shahansha" (The King of all kings). Such a word can only be used for Allāh. [*Mishkāt*]

In the same regard, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed the name of a girl named Āsia (sinner) to Jamīla. He also prohibited people from calling their

male slaves 'abdi' (my slave), and their female slaves 'amati' (my slave woman) because every person is Allāh's slave. He advised them to rather refer to their slaves as 'ghulāmi' or 'jāriyati.' [*Mishkāt*]

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿105﴾

(105) The disbelievers from the People of the Book and the idolators do not like that any good is revealed to you from your Lord. But Allāh focuses His mercy on whomsoever He pleases. Allāh is One of extreme benevolence

THE JEWS AND THE IDOLATORS DETEST THE FACT THAT ALLĀH'S MERCY SHOULD REACH THE MUSLIMS.

When the Muslims invited the Jews to accept Islām, they replied by saying that Islām is no better than their own Dīn *(Religion)*. They said that if Islām was better than Judaism, only then would they accept. Allāh refuted this statement by revealing the verse, '(Oh Muslims!) *The disbelievers from the People of the Book and the idolators do not like that any good be revealed to you from your Lord.*

The Jews detested the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was from amongst the prcgeny of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام (i.e. the Arabs), and not from amongst the progeny of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام (i.e. the Jews). The Polytheists detested Islām because it restricted their carnal passions and opposed their gods.

Allāh dispels their misgivings by saying that He is not bound to do as others desire, *'But Allāh focuses His mercy on whomsoever He pleases. Allāh is One of extreme benevolence."* None has the right to question Allāh's decision. [*Ma'alimut Tanzīl v.1, p.103 and Rūhul Ma'āni, v.1, p.350*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that Allāh expresses the enmity of the Jews and the Polytheists in this verse so that the Muslims do not develop any affinity or companionship them. Allāh refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and all the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* in the phrase, *"whomsoever He pleases."*

مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنْسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا ۗ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿106﴾ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿107﴾

(106) Whenever We repeal any verse or cause it to be forgotten. We bring something better or equivalent to it. Do you not know that Allah has power over all things? (107) Do you not know that the dominion of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allāh? Besides Him you have no Protecting Friend, nor any Helper.

THE REASON FOR ALLĀH REPEALING LAWS

Allāh has abrogated many laws. It is possible, for example for something to be outlawed although it could be made permissible afterwards. Sometimes a law may be replaced by another. The Polytheists criticised this when they said, "Muhammad the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says things that he later retracts. If the Qur'ān was from Allāh, there would not have been any abrogation."

Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"When We replace a verse with another; and Allāh knows best what He reveals; they say, 'You are but a perjurer!' But most of them have no knowledge.'* [*verse* 101]

"Whenever We repeal any verse or cause it to be forgotten, We bring something better or equivalent to it." Laws were abrogated because the later law was intended to make matters easier for the Muslims without compromising the reward to be attained. Therefore, abrogation is in the best interests of people.

Abrogation may assume several forms. These are:

⇒ *At times a law was abrogated, while the relevant verse still remained in the Qur'ān. This is termed as 'Mansūkhul Hukm." An example of this is the law that states that a woman should seclude herself for a year after her husband has passed away However, this law was repealed, but the applicable verse still remains in the Qur'ān. The relevant verse is Those of you who are about to die and leave their wives behind, should bequeath unto their wives a provision for a year so as not to turn them out (of their homes).* [*Surah Al-Baqarah, verse* 240]

⇒ *At times, the law still applied, while the relevant verse was abrogated. This is referred to a 'Mansūkhut Tilāwah. 'An example of this is the law of 'rajm' (when a married adulterer is stoned to death).*

⇒ *Another form of abrogation concerns a law which was replaced with another For example, the initial law to face Baitul Muqaddas in Salāh was replaced with the command to face towards the Ka'ba. Another example is the command that demanded that a bequest, be made in favour of one's relatives. This law was changed by the verses of inheritance.*

⇒ *It has also occurred that certain laws were abrogated with out any replacement being revealed. An example of this is the command to test the Believer (Mu'min) women when they migrate, which is contained in verse 10 of Surah Mumtahina.*

⇒ *Other laws and verses were completely removed from the Qur'ān and erased from peoples' minds. Certain Scholars (Ulamā) have mentioned that the volume of these verses were as long as Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Ahzāb. They were completely removed without any trace of their words and their laws.*

Durrul Manthūr reports from Sayyidina Sahl bin Hunaif رحمة الله عليه that a certain Sahabi رضي الله عنه intended to recite a particular Surah in the Tahajjud

Salāh, but could not recall anything besides "*Bismillah Hir Rahman Nir Rahīm.*" The same transpired with many Companions *(Sahābah)* رضی اللہ عنہ on the same night. When they reported the incident to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم he said, 'The Surah was abrogated last night and erased from peoples' hearts and from all places where it was recorded."

"*Do you not know that Allah has power over all things?*" Allāh can preserve verses as they a·e, or cause them to be erased forever. According to his perfect wisdom, He does as He pleases.

"*Do you not know that the dominion of heavens and the earth belongs to Allāh*" (if He chooses to punish you, then remember) Besides Him, you have no Protecting Friend, nor any Helper.

أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ وَمَن يَتَبَدَّلِ ٱلْكُفْرَ بِٱلْإِيمَـٰنِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿108﴾

(108) Or do you wish to question your messenger like how Mūsa was questioned before? The one who exchanges disbelief for belief has certainly strayed from the straight path.

THE PROHIBITION FROM ASKING FUTILE QUESTIONS

"Ma'alimut Tanzīl reports that the Jews once asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, "Oh Muhammad the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم! Why don't you present the Qur'ān as a complete book from the heavens like Mūsa علیہ السلام did'?" According to another narration, the Polytheists of Makkah told the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that they would only believe in him if they saw Allāh and His angels before them. The above verse was revealed in response to such demands.

Allāh commands that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم must not be asked to do those things that the Bani Isrā'īl asked Sayyidina Mūsa علیہ السلام to do. The Bani Isrā'īl even asked Sayyidina Mūsa علیہ السلام to show Allāh to them. There is no need to make such requests because the Truth has already been made manifest in many other ways. However, they ask merely as an objection and will not accept even when it is shown to them.

Allāh says in Surah Qasas (*verse 48*), "*When the truth from Us comes to them they say, 'Why is he not given what was given to Mūsa?' Did they not deny what was given to Mūsa from before?*

They said, "*They are both magicians assisting each other and they also said, 'We reject each one of them.*"

Muslim reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once told the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضی اللہ عنہ, "Oh people! Hajj has been made compulsory on you. So perform it." Thereupon someone asked, "Is hajj compulsory every year?" The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم remained silent till the question was repeated thrice. Thereafter, the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "If I had to say, 'Yes,' hajj would become compulsory on you every year, which you would not be able to

do. Leave me as long as I leave you (i.e. do not ask about something I do not tell you). The previous nations were destroyed because they asked their Prophet *(Anbiya)* many questions and then opposed their commands. When I issue any instruction, fulfill it to the best of your ability. If I forbid something, refrain from it." [*v.1, p.432*]

Sayyidina Mughīra bin Shu'ba رضی الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that Allāh detests vain talk, excessive questioning and wasting money. [*Mishkāt, p. 419*]

وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَٰبِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا
مِّنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۖ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ
بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿109﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَوٰةَ ۚ وَمَا
تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿110﴾

(109) Many of the People of the Book wish that they could return you to be disbelievers after you have believed. This is due to jealousy from within after the truth has because apparent to them. Pardon and overlook till Allāh issues His command. Undoubtedly Allāh has power over all things. (110) So establish Salāh, pay Zakāh. You shall find with Allāh whatever good you have sent ahead for yourselves. Verily Allāh is Watchful of what you do.

THE INFIDELS *(KUFFĀR)* DESIRE TO CONVERT THE MUSLIMS

Besides not believing despite being convinced of the Risālat (prophethood) of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, the Jews left no stone unturned to prevent the Arabs from becoming Muslims. They even went to the extent of attempting to convert those who had already accepted Islām. Allāh cautions the Muslims to beware of them in the above verse saying, *"Many of the People of the Book wish that they could return you to be disbelievers after you have believed. This is due to jealousy from within after the truth has become apparent to them."*

At the time when the verse was revealed the Jews were still in a powerful economic position while the Muslims had not yet entrenched a firm foothold in Madinah. Therefore, Allāh commanded the Muslims, *"Pardon and overlook till Allāh issues His command. Undoubtedly Allāh has power over all things."* Allāh has the power to change situations. Consequently, the time came when the Jewish tribe of the Bani Nadīr were banished to Khaibar and the Bani Quraizah were executed.

Thereafter Allāh says, *"So establish Salāh, pay Zakāh. You shall find with Allāh whatever good you have sent ahead for yourselves."*

In the above verses, Allāh advises the Muslims to establish Salāh after already commanding them to exercise patience with the words, *"Pardon and overlook till Allāh issues His command."* This conforms with verses 45 and 153 of Surah Al-Baqarah where Allāh advises, *"Seek assistance with patience and*

Salāh." Muslims can attain victory over their enemies by performing good deeds that will secure success in both worlds.

"Verily Allāh is Watchful of what you do." Allāh will reward or punish people according to their deeds.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "When a person gives even a single date in charity from Lawful *(halāl)* sources (Allāh only accepts Lawful *(halāl)*, then Allāh will nurture and develop the reward for this just as a person grows up his little pony. Eventually, the reward grows so big that it equals the size of a mountain." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.189*]

وَقَالُوا لَن يَدْخُلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَٰرَىٰ ۗ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ ۗ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَٰنَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١١١﴾ بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَجْرُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

(111) They say, "None but a Jew or a Christian will enter Heaven (Jannah)." This is their hope. Say, "Produce your proof if you are truthful." (112) However, the one who surrenders himself to Allāh and does righteous deeds shall find his reward with his Lord. Neither will fear overtake them, nor shall they grieve.

A DENIAL OF THE CLAIM OF THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS THAT HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* IS RESERVED ONLY FOR THEM

"They say None but a Jew or a Christian will enter Heaven (Jannah)." The Jews claimed that Heaven *(Jannah)* was reserved for them, while the Christians claimed that only they may enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. Despite adulterating their scriptures and denying Allāh's Prophets *(Anbiya)*, these people have the audacity to claim their places in Heaven *(Jannah)*! Due to the baseless nature of their claim Allāh says, *"This is their hope."*

Allāh then commands that they should be asked, *"Produce your proof if you are truthful."* They have absolutely no proof for their claim to be the chosen people.

Verse 18 of Surah Mā'idah quotes them as saying, *"We are Allāh 's children and beloved."* How can anyone be close to Allāh when they subscribe to polytheistic beliefs and reject Allāh's messengers? They believed these things to appease their consciences and also because of the misleading advice of their leaders.

The Jewish Dīn *(Religion)* is ancestral because they believe that only their people can be Jews. They do not propagate their Dīn *(Religion)* because they feel that their Dīn *(Religion)* is reserved for them only. They believe that only they have been guided and that the rest of mankind should have no Dīn *(Religion)* from Allāh.

The Christians do not even follow the Dīn *(Religion)* brought by Sayyidina Isa علیه السلام. They claim that he told them that he was Allāh's son and that he

commanded them to worship him and his mother. They also claim that Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام told them that he will be killed and that Allāh had His son killed to serve as salvation for all mankind. However, they have fabricated all these claims and have nothing to prove that these claims are true.

The Christians accept all these claims because of convenience. It is all too easy to endlessly commit sins and have them all forgiven by the priest the following Sunday. In this stupor, they even concede to the priest as being Allāh's deputy. Despite all these made up beliefs, the Christians claim their right to Heaven *(Jannah)*! This is nothing more than mere wishful thinking.

People of many other Dīn's (religions) also entertain this wishful thinking with regard to themselves. However, none of them can prove that their Dīn *(Religion)* can secure salvation for them in the Hereafter. It is strange that these very people eat and enjoy Allāh's bounties, yet offer their allegiance and devotion to other gods, wishfully expecting to attain Heaven *(Jannah)*!

WHO IS DESERVING OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*?

Allāh describes the people worthy of Heaven *(Jannah)* when He says, *"However, the one who surrenders himself to Allāh and does righteous deeds shall find his reward with his Lord. Neither will fear overtake them, nor shall they grieve."* This verse contains the prescription for entry into Heaven *(Jannah)*, which any person can use.

The Arabic word "muhsin" (translated above as *"does righteous deeds*) is derived from the root word 'Ihsān,' which refers to a person who performs an act properly or whose beliefs are correct. Certain commentators have translated 'muhsin' as 'sincere.' Therefore, the 'muhsin' will be one whose beliefs conform to what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has taught. Whoever does not conform to these beliefs cannot be termed a 'muhsin' and therefore cannot secure Heaven *(Jannah)* for himself

Similarly, the person whose deeds do not conform to the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as well as the one whose deeds are not carried out sincerely for Allāh's pleasure, will have his/her deeds rejected. Such a person will therefore receive no rewards in the Hereafter.

Allāh says in the concluding verse of Surah Kahf, *"So whoever aspires for the meeting with his Lord should perform good deeds and not associate anyone as partner to the worship of his Lord."*

If the infidels *(kuffār)* perform a deed sincerely for Allāh's pleasure, it will not be accepted because of their corrupted beliefs. With regard to their deeds, Allāh says in verse 23 of Surah Furqān, *"We will then turn to their deeds and reduce it to scattered dust."*

If anyone should say that the verse does not specify that a person needs to be a Muslim to enter Heaven *(Jannah)*, he will be told that the phrases *"the one who surrenders himself to Allāh"* and *"does righteous deeds* {i.e. is a Benefactor *(muhsin)*}" will automatically disqualify non-Muslims. Besides this, other verses specify this condition e.g. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Whosoever seeks a Dīn (Religion) besides Islām, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be, in the*

Hereafter, amongst the losers." [*verse 85*]

وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ ٱلنَّصَـٰرَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ وَقَالَتِ ٱلنَّصَـٰرَىٰ لَيْسَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۚ فَٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿113﴾

(113) The Jews say, "The Christians are upon naught," while the Christians say, "The Jews are upon naught," whereas they recite the scripture. Those who have no knowledge say exactly what they say. Allāh will judge between them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyamah) concerning the matters in which they differ.

THE DEBATE BETWEEN THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS.

Durrul Manthūr (*v.1, p.108*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that the Jews were present with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when the Christians of Najrān came to him. One of the Jews by the name of Rāfi bin Harmīla said to the Christians, "You people have no basis, nor did you ever have." In saying so he rejected the Risālat (prophethood) of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام as well as the Injīl.

Thereupon a person from the Christians said, *"You people are upon naught!"* (i.e. your Dīn *(Religion)* has no source). In this way, he also became guilty of refuting one of Allāh's Prophets *(Anbiya)* [Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام] and His Book (i.e. the Torah).

It was with reference to this dispute that Allāh revealed the above verse saying, *"The Jews say, 'The Christians are upon naught, while the Christians say, 'The Jews are upon naught,' whereas they recite the scripture."* Based on their knowledge of the Torah and the Injīl, both parties were aware of the fact that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام were Allāh's Prophets *(Anbiya)*.

"Those who have no knowledge say exactly what they say." i.e. People of the nations prior to the Jews and the Christians also rejected the truth, just like the Polytheists of Makkah rejected the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

However, *"Allāh will judge between them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyamah) concerning the matters in which they differ"* The truth will then become apparent from falsehood for all to see.

Allāh says in Surah Saba (*verse 26*), *"Say, 'Our Lord will gather us and then decide between us with the truth"*

The author of Bayānul Qur'ān writes that Allāh will decide practically between them by dispatching the people of falsehood to Hell and the people of the truth to Heaven *(Jannah)*. The theoretical decision has already been made in this world via various logical and other proofs.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ أَن يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ وَسَعَىٰ فِى خَرَابِهَآ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَن يَدْخُلُوهَآ إِلَّا خَآئِفِينَ ۚ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا خِزْىٌ وَلَهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

(114) "Who can be more unjust than the one who prevents the name of Allāh being taken in the mosque (masājid) and exerts himself for its ruination. These people may only enter therein in fear. Theirs shall be humiliation in this world and a terrible punishment in the Hereafter."

THE GRAVE INJUSTICE OF PREVENTING ALLĀH'S NAME BEING TAKEN IN THE MOSQUE *(MASĀJID)*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*vol.1, pg. 107*) reports from certain commentators that the above verse was revealed with reference to the Polytheists of Makkah when they prevented the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنه from entering the Masjidul Harām) to perform Umrah.

Masājid [plural of Mosque *(Masjid)*] are constructed for Salāh, recitation of the Qur'ān, remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)*, etc. Tawāf also takes place in the Masjidul Harām. Preventing people from these acts will result in the ruination of a Mosque *(Masjid)*. While the Polytheists thought that they were maintaining the Masjidul Harām as its custodians, they were actually contributing to its ruination by placing their idols in the Ka'ba and preventing the Muslims from performing their Salāh therein. This was one of the reasons that forced the Muslims to migrate to Madinah.

When the Muslims tried to return to Makkah to perform umrah, the Polytheists did not even allow them to enter the precincts of Makkah. Eventually the Muslims had to return without performing umrah and were only allowed into Makkah the following year.

Allāh says about the Polytheists, *"These people may only enter therein in fear."* Theirs shall be humiliation in this world and a terrible punishment in the Hereafter". This verse foretold the conquest of Makkah by the Muslims, where after the Polytheists feared entering the Masjidul Harām. The declaration was finally made that no polytheist *(Mushrik)* was ever to enter the Masjidul Harām again. [*Ma'alimut Tanzīl, v.1, p.107*]

Other commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to the Jews and the Christians, who violated the sanctity of Baitul Muqaddas. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers specifically to the Christians, who used to throw harmful things into the Baitul Muqaddas and prevented people from performing Salāh there.

Sayyidina Qatadah رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to the Romans who, because of their enmity for the Jews, assisted the fire worshipping Bakht Nasr to destroy Baitul Muqaddas. Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه says that the Christians burnt Baitul Muqaddas after seizing control. Now, any Christian entering there will do so in fear. [*Durrul Manthūr, v.1, p.108*]

Whatever the specific reference of the verse, the wording of the verse is general. The verse makes it clear that preventing Allāh's name being taken in the mosques (*masājid*) is an act of great injustice. It will be permissible to prevent such people from the Mosque (*Masjid*) who have left the fold of Islām e.g. those who believe that another Prophet came after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Preventing their entry will not be regarded as preventing Allāh's name being taken because it will actually save others from infidelity *(Kufr)*.

When such a group of people were prevented from entering a mosque (Masjid), they recited the above verse in their defence. Thereupon a learned scholar recited to them the following verse of Surah An'ām, *'Who can be more unjust than he who invents lies against Allāh and says, 'Revelation comes to me, when no revelation comes to him at all? (And who can be more unjust than) he who says, I shall soon reveal the like of what Allāh has revealed."* [*verse* 93]

Some commentators have mentioned that the phrase *"These people may only enter therein in fear"* does not only apply to the Masjidul Haram, but to any Mosque (Masjid). [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.157*]

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that, with Allāh's grace, He has fulfilled His promise to grant victory to the Muslims. Therefore, a Christian may only enter Baitul Muqaddas in fear and disguise. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه reports that any Christian found in Baitul Muqaddas is severely punished.

Since the verse does not stipulate that the Muslims will remain in control over Baitul Muqaddas forever, none can raise the objection that the Christian Crusaders seized control of Baitul Muqaddas [after which Salahudīn Ayyubi رحمة الله عليه defeated them]. Because of the weakness in the Belief *(Imān)*, deeds and strategy of the Muslims, they lost control over the region.

"These people may only enter therein in fear." The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" interprets this verse to mean that these people ought never to even enter Baitul Muqaddas without fear, let alone violate its sanctity. Violating its sanctity is the injustice referred to at the beginning of the verse.

"Theirs shall be humiliation in this world and a terrible punishment in the Hereafter" All those who prevented Allāh's name being taken in the Masjidul Harām and Baitul Muqaddas suffered defeat at the hands of the Muslims. The Jews and Christians had to pay protection tax *(Jizya)* to the Muslims. However, they will suffer the worst punishment in the Hereafter.

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

(115) To Allāh belongs the east and the west. Wherever you turn, you will find Allāh's presence. Undoubtedly Allāh is All Encompassing, All Knowing.

YOU WILL FIND ALLĀHS PRESENCE WHEREVER YOU TURN

Lubābun Nuqūl has recorded three narrations which provide reasons for the revelation of this verse. The common factor in all these narrations is that the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنه erred in determining the accurate direction of the Qibla (either because of darkness of the night *or* overcast conditions). They all

performed their Salāh facing the direction they thought was most accurate in their estimation. Only when light returned did they realise how wrong they were.

When they reported the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he remained silent. It was then that Allāh revealed the above verse. One of these narrations is reported in Tirmidhi.

THE LAW REGARDING THE DIRECTION OF THE QIBLA

Like many other verses of the Qur'ān, this verse denotes that every' direction belongs to Allāh (not only the east and west). Therefore, Allāh reserves the right to stipulate any direction as a Qibla (a direction to face while praying to Allāh).

The Being of Allāh is not restricted to any place or direction. People have to face the direction that He ordains as their Qibla. Performing Salāh in the stipulated direction will secure His pleasure.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه says that the above verse was revealed with regard to performing Nafl *(optional)* Salāh while on a journey. While the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم travelled from Makkah to Madinah, he performed Nafl (*optional*) Salāh in the direction which the camel faced. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Anas bin Sīrīn رحمة الله عليه reports that they received Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه as he returned from Shām *(Syria)*. When he reached a place called Ainut Tamar, they noticed that he was performing Salāh while facing a direction that was completely deflected from the Qibla. When Sayyidina Anas bin Sīrīn رحمة الله عليه asked the companion *(Sahābi)*, Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه about this, the latter replied, "I would have never done this if I had not seen the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم do the same." [*Muslim, v.1, p.244/5*]

"Undoubtedly Allāh is All Encompassing, All Knowing." Some commentators have mentioned that Allāh's knowledge encompasses everything, while others translate the word to mean that Allāh is extremely lenient in His commands and passes such laws that people find easy to practise upon.

Others translate the word to mean that Allāh is extremely generous, while another group of commentators maintain that it means that Allāh's mercy and forgiveness encompass all sins because He may forgive any of them. [*Qurtubi, v.2,, p.84*]

"Rūhul Ma'āni" says that Allāh's Kingdom and mercy encompass everything, because of which He has made the matter of Qibla easy and flexible for people. He has knowledge of every action and will even reward the person who faces the wrong direction on condition that he performs Salāh solely for Allāh's pleasure.

VARIOUS RULINGS CONCERNING THE QIBLA

Ruling: Facing the Qibla is one of the conditions of Salāh. Salāh will be unacceptable without facing the Qibla unless fear of an enemy does not allow one to face the Qibla. In that case, any direction will suffice. That particular direction will then be regarded as a person's Qibla.

Ruling: If an individual or a group reach a place where there is nobody to show them the direction of the Qibla, they should determine the direction as best as they can. Thereafter each person should face the direction that he feels is accurate. If, once they have commenced Salāh, someone informs them of the correct direction. they merely have to turn in that particular direction while still in Salāh. They will not have to repeat their Salāh, nor start afresh.

Ruling: It will not be necessary to repeat one's Salāh if one finds out after the Salāh that the direction was incorrect.

Ruling: If a group of Muslims cannot see each other due to intense darkness, each one may face the direction he deems correct. They will then be able to perform their Salāh in congregation even though they are all facing different directions. However, if any one of the followers knows that the direction towards which the Imām is facing is contrary to the direction to which he is facing, then he will not be able to follow this Imām in Salāh.

The person to whose back the Imām faces will also not be regarded as part of the congregation because he is considered to be ahead of the Imām.

Ruling: When a person is travelling on a conveyance outside the boundaries of a town, he may perform Nafl *(optional)* Salāh in whichever direction the conveyance is facing. He may continue his Salāh even though the conveyance changes direction.

Ruling: Fardh *(compulsory)* Salāh can only be performed facing the Qibla. However, one is excused when performing Salāh in a place where there is none to inform him of the correct direction. Then too, he will have to ponder deeply over the correct direction. Only after deliberation will he be allowed to perform his Salāh.

Ruling: People travelling by sea, spacious trains and aeroplanes can easily face Qibla when performing Salāh. They can only face another direction if it is impossible to face the Qibla.

THE REASON FOR FACING TOWARDS A QIBLA.

A Qibla is necessary to attain unity when performing Salāh. Without the Qibla, people will be facing in various directions, leading to much disturbance and disagreement. After migrating to Madinah, the Muslims faced Baitul Muqaddas in Salāh, where after the Qibla was changed to the Ka'ba. The details of this will be given, Insha Allāh.

Muslims do not worship the Ka'ba, but face the direction to achieve uniformity and concentration. Although they face the Ka'ba, they worship Allāh. It never crosses their minds that they are worshipping the Ka'ba, unlike the idolators who worship the idols they face.

Note: The fact that the Muslims faced Baitul Muqaddas and the Ka'ba shows that worship is reserved for Allāh because the direction never really mattered to Allāh, to Whom belongs all directions. When Muslims throughout the world face the Ka'ba in Salāh, they face it from every direction, making all directions of the Ka'ba a Qibla. This provides a clearer interpretation of the verse

'Wherever you turn, you will find Allāh 's presence."

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا ۗ سُبْحَانَهُ ۖ بَل لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُ قَانِتُونَ ﴿116﴾ بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿117﴾

(116) They say, "Allāh has taken a son." Allāh is Pure! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are subservient to Him; (117) The Creator of the heavens and the earth. When He decides a matter, all He says is, "Be!" and it is.

THE DEVIATION OF THOSE WHO ASCRIBE CHILDREN TO ALLĀH

Allāh immediately refutes those who say that He has a child when He says, "Allāh *is Pure!*" The Jews said that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh's son, while the Christians maintained that Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام is Allāh's son (as mentioned in verse 30 of Surah Tauba).

The Polytheists of Makkah used to say that the angels are Allāh's daughters. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"Has your Lord chosen sons only for you and taken the angels as His daughters? You are surely making a preposterous statement."* [*verse* 40]

Verse 19 of Surah Zukhruf mentions, *"They make the angels, who are Allāh's bondsmen, as females. Were they present at their creation? Their claim will be recorded and they will be questioned."*

The Qur'ān denies that Allāh has any children, and the fact is made clear in Surah Ikhlās, where Allāh says, *"He begets not, nor was He begotten. There is none comparable to Him."* [*verses 3 and 4*]

Verses 100 and 101 of Surah An'ām state, *"Yet they associate the Jinn as partners to Allāh whereas He had created them. And they fabricate sons and daughters for Him without knowledge. He is Pure from these things and Exalted above what they ascribe. He created the heavens and the earth without a sample. How can He have children when He has no wife? He created everything and has knowledge of everything."*

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"They say, Rahmān has taken a child. You have certainly said a grave thing. The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to pieces. All this because they ascribed children to Allāh. It is not befitting of Rahmān to take children. Everything within the heavens and the earth shall come to Rahmān as slaves {on the Day of Resurrection (Qiyāmah)}."* [*verses 88 to 93*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh says, *"The son of Ādam has falsified Me whereas he should not do so. He swears Me whereas he should not. His falsification is that he says that I cannot resurrect him, whereas it is the same to Me to create him the second time as I did the first time. His swearing is that he says that I have children, whereas I am Pure from having a wife and children. I am the One, The Independent. I beget not nor was I begotten. There is none equal to Me."* [*Bukhari, v.2,, p.744*]

The above verses and hadith spell out clearly that Allāh detests that people ascribe children to Him. If it were not for His extreme mercy and compassion, He would have destroyed the entire universe because of their Polytheism *(shirk)*.

NONE IS MORE FORBEARING THAN ALLĀH

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "None is more forbearing than Allāh in tolerating what people say, People say that Allāh has children, yet He forgives them and even sustains them." [*Mishkāt p. 13*]

"To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are subservient to Him." For any relationship to exist between Allāh and those whom people refer to as His children, some similarity has to exist. However, no one ever be at all similar to Allāh. Therefore, it is impossible for them to be His children. To ascribe children to Him will mean that He needs them, whereas Allāh needs nothing. It will be tantamount to saying that He is not perfect and that He has defects. It is for this reason that, in the hadith, ascribing children to Allāh is described as swearing Him.

"The creator of the heavens and the earth." Allāh created the universe without a model and He is the Only Being Who is perfectly in control of it.

"When He decides a matter, all He says is, Be! and it is.,' This verse describes the majestical power of Allāh. He does not require any means or material to create anything. His mere intention to create something is sufficient to ensure the existence of the thing in question. Just as Allāh does not require any means or matter, He does not also require any children and assistants.

The function of children is to assist the parents and serve as their successors after their demise. Allāh requires no assistance and will never die. He therefore has no need for children.

Some commentators have mentioned that Allāh literally says the word "Kun!" (translated above as "Be!"). People have objected to this by saying that it is not possible, nor sensible to address something that is non-existent. However, this objection is invalid because the existence of the particular thing is not necessary for the address to take place. Many Commentators say that Allāh does not need to say "Kun!" The term is merely an expression of the great speed with which Allāh creates.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَآ ءَايَةٌ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَٰبَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿118﴾

(118) Those without knowledge say, "Why does Allāh not speak to us, or why do you not show us a sign?" Those before them said exactly the same thing. Their hearts are alike. We have already expounded the signs for those who have conviction.

THOSE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE WANT ALLĀH TO SPEAK TO THEM

It was common among various nations that they refuted the proofs and miracles shown to them by the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام. Rather, they wanted to witness miracles that they demanded. One of their demands was that Allāh should speak to them. They said, *"Why does Allāh not speak to us, or why do you not show us a sign?"* Certain commentators have mentioned that the verse refers to a statement of the Polytheists, while others say that it was a statement of the Jews and the Christians.

If the verse refers to the Polytheists, they fit well into the description of *"Those without knowledge"* because they were generally illiterate people. However, if the verse is assumed to refer to the Jews and the Christians, then *"Those without knowledge"* would mean that they behaved as if they had no knowledge.

"Those before them said exactly the same thing. Their hearts are alike" The people of previous nations also said the same things to their Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام because they were just as obstinate and rebellious.`

"We have already expounded the signs for those who have conviction." All the previous Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام as well as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed numerous miracles for the people. However, those who do not wish to believe will not do so even if the truth is as clear as daylight.

Allāh says in Surah Qamar (*verse* 2), *"Even if they see miracles, they turn away saying, 'This is incessant magic.'*

Verse 109 of Surah An'ām says, *"They swear solemn oaths by Allāh that if any sign comes to them from Allāh, they will definitely believe therein. Say, 'Signs are only with Allāh. How do you know that if the sign comes to them, they will still not believe?"*

They only ask for a miracle because of their obstinacy, but they never really intend to believe if it is shown to them.

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۖ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُ عَنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿١١٩﴾

(119) Undoubtedly We have sent you with the truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner. You will not be questioned about the people of the Blaze.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS SENT AS A BEARER OF GLAD TIDINGS AND AS A WARNER

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this verse saying, *"Undoubtedly We have sent you with the truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner"* the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم mission was to teach people the deeds by which they can enter into Heaven *(Jannah)*. He described these deeds to people and also warned them about the sins that will lead them to the doom of Hell.

"You will not be questioned about the people of the Blaze." Here Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by telling him that he should not be grieved about

those who refuse to accept his message. His task was merely to propagate Islām. Allāh is the One Who can make people believe. Allāh will not question the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the reason for the rejection of the Infidels *(kuffār)*.

Allāh says in Surah Ra'd, *"propagation will be your responsibility and reckoning Ours."* [*verse 40*]

Verses 21 and 22 of Surah Gāshiyah reads, *"Remind, for verily you are a reminder. You are not a warder unto them."*

Allāh says in the concluding verse of Surah Qāf, *"We are best aware of what they say. You are not a tyrant over them. So remind with the Qur'ān those who fear the threat."* [*verse 45*]

وَلَن تَرْضَىٰ عَنكَ ٱلْيَهُودُ وَلَا ٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ ۗ
وَلَئِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَآءَهُم بَعْدَ ٱلَّذِى جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ ۙ مَا لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾

(120) The Jews and the Christians will never be satisfied with you until you follow their Dīn (Religion). Say, "Guidance is only the guidance of Allāh." If you were ever to follow their whims after the knowledge that has come to you, you will have no protecting friend nor any helper against Allāh.

THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS WILL NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH YOU UNTIL YOU ADOPE THEIR DĪN *(RELIGION)*.

"Ma'alimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p. 110*) reports that the Jews and Christians once proposed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should compromise on certain principles and enter into a settlement with them so that they could accept Islām. In response to this proposal the above verse was revealed, where Allāh says, *"The Jews and the Christians will never be satisfied with you until you follow their Dīn (Religion)."*

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes (*v.2, p.93*) that the verse tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that even if he has to reproduce the miracles that they demand from him (as mentioned in the previous verse), they will still never be satisfied till he forsakes Islām and follows their Dīn *(Religion)*.

"Say, 'Guidance is only the guidance of Allāh." Anything contrary to Allāh's guidance will lead to distant deviation. Thereafter Allāh says, *"If you were ever to follow their whims after the knowledge that has come to you, you will have no protecting friend nor any helper against Allāh."* Although the verse is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it actually applies to his ummah because it was impossible for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to follow any other Dīn *(Religion)*.

The demand of Belief *(Imān)* is that the Believer *(Mu'min)* should strive only to please Allāh, even though it may earn the displeasure of others. Trying to satisfy others at the expense of Allāh's pleasure is foolish and detrimental. It is tragic that the Muslims in today's times attempt to imitate the ways and manners of the Infidels *(kuffār)*. They feel no shame in shaking hands with strange women and even feel proud to wear the tie.

In doing all this they feel that their Infidels *(kuffār)* colleagues will be pleased with them. Otherwise, they feel that they will be ridiculed. It is extremely sad that they hanker after praise from the Jews and Christians even though they earn Allāh's displeasure. They fail to realise that these few deeds will never satisfy the Infidels *(kuffār)*. The Infidels *(kuffār)* will be satisfied only when the Muslim has converted to their Dīn *(Religion)*.

Muslims do not need praise from the Infidels *(kuffār)* because they already have the accolade of being believers from amongst the ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Securing honour from the Infidels *(kuffār)* will lead to disgrace in both the worlds. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Do they seek honour from them (kuffār) All honour belongs only to Allāh."* [*verse* 139]

Note: The verse states that the Jews and Christians will not be satisfied until the Muslims follow their *"Dīn (Religion)."* The word "Dīn *(Religion)*" is singular, whereas the Jews and Christians follow different *Dīn (religion)*. Therefore, one would expect that the word *"Dīn's (Religion's)* be used instead. Commentators have mentioned that Allāh has used the word as a singular to denote that, although the Infidels *(kuffār)* belong to various denominations and Dīn *(Religion)*, they all share the common factor of infidelity *(Kufr)*. Therefore, there actually exists only two Dīn *(Religions)* viz. Islām and infidelity *(Kufr)*.

It is also an acknowledged fact that all religious groups unite as allies to fight Islām, making them one team. Worse is the fact that many so-called Muslims sects (*but whose beliefs are un-Islāmic*) are also plotting to destroy Muslim countries.

A WORD OF CAUTION TO THE MUSLIMS

The above verse informs Muslims that they should never compromise any Islamic principles to appease the infidels *(kuffār)* because Islām is not a man-made Dīn *(Religion)*, but a code of life ordained by Allāh. Muslims have no right to alter any Islāmic principles. The Infidels *(kuffār)* alter their Dīn *(Religion)* because their Dīn *(Religion)* is a product of their own doings. The laws of Islām cannot be changed even if some people collectively try to do so.

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَتْلُونَهُۥ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِۦٓ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِۦ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

(121) Those to whom We have given the Book recite it as it rightfully should be recited. These are the ones who believe in it. Whoever does not believe it shall certainly be the losers.

THOSE WHO RECITE THE BOOK AS IT DESERVES TO BE RECITED

The above verse praises the Believers as people who recite the Qur'ān *"as it rightfully should be recited."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه have interpreted the verse to mean that these

people carry out the deeds enjoined by the Qur'ān and abstain from what it forbids. They recite the Qur'ān as it was revealed, without making any changes to the words or the meaning.

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that they practise those verses that are lucid, believe in those that are 'mutashābih" (allegorical) and refer their doubts and queries to the men of knowledge. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه has mentioned that this verse refers to people who plead for Allāh's mercy when they recite any verse mentioning His mercy, and they implore Him for safety from punishment when they recite verses which mention His punishment. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.163/4*]

Reciting the Qur'ān as it was revealed means that the Qur'ān must be recited in compliance to the rules of Tajwīd. The Arabic alphabet comprises of 29 letters, all of which have to be recited correctly, together with all their vocal attributes. Negligence in this regard will lead one to recite a letter as another, thereby changing the meaning of words. By doing so, one's Salāh may also be nullified in certain instances. To correct this, it is imperative that every Muslim should study the subject of Tajwīd.

Allāh then says that those who recite the Qur'ān as it should be recited *"are the ones who believe in it."* It is noted from this that one of the demands of belief *(Imān)* is that the Qur'ān be recited as it rightfully deserves to be.

"Whoever does not believe it shall certainly be the losers" Their ultimate abode will be nothing less than Hell.

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتِيَ ٱلَّتِيٓ أَنۡعَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلۡتُكُمۡ عَلَى ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿122﴾ وَٱتَّقُواْ يَوۡمٗا لَّا تَجۡزِي نَفۡسٌ عَن نَّفۡسٖ شَيۡـٔٗا وَلَا يُقۡبَلُ مِنۡهَا عَدۡلٞ وَلَا تَنفَعُهَا شَفَٰعَةٞ وَلَا هُمۡ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿123﴾

(122) Oh children of Isrā'īl, call to mind My favour that I bestowed upon you and that I preferred you above the universe. (123) Fear the day when one soul will not avail another in the least, no ransom will be taken, no intercession will be of any assistance, and they will not be helped.

THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL ARE AGAIN REMINDED OF ALLĀH'S FAVOURS TO THEM

In the same words used in verse 47 of Surah Al-Baqarah, Allāh again reminds the Bani Isrā'īl about His favours to them saying, *"Oh children of Isrā'īl, call to mind My favour that I bestowed upon you and that I preferred you above the universe."* After verse 47, Allāh proceeded to mention the many favours in detail. Allāh made mention of the various evils and false hopes of the Jews. They were reminded of the time when they worshipped the calf, of their involvement in magic, of their mockery of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying "Rā'inā," and many other crimes.

After mentioning all these ill deeds, Allāh repeats the opening two verses with a slight change in the second. These verses remind them of Allāh's favours for which they need to express gratitude by carrying out good deeds. Thereafter, they are reminded about the Hereafter so that they desist from their evil ways and accept Islām. However, despite all of this, many of the Jews never accepted Islām.

۞ وَإِذِ ٱبْتَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ رَبُّهُۥ بِكَلِمَـٰتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّى جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِى ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

(124) When his Lord tried Ibrahīm with certain words which he fulfilled, Allāh said, "I am to make you a leader for the people." Ibrahīm said, "And from my progeny?" Allāh replied, "My covenant will not reach the oppressors.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام PASSES THE TESTS AND IS MADE A LEADER

Allāh says that He *"tried Ibrahīm with certain words which he fulfilled."*

WHAT IS MEANT BY "CERTAIN WORDS?"

Some commentators say that these *"words"* refer to the laws of his Shari'ah, which Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام fulfilled to the finest detail. Allāh says in Surah Najm (*verse 37*), *"And Ibrahīm who fulfilled the commands."* With regard to what these laws and commands were, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has tendered the following interpretations:

- *The injunctions and rites of Hajj*
- *Laws of purity and cleanliness. Five of these pertain to the head, while another five concern the rest of the body. Those relevant to the head are:*

(1) Trimming the moustache.
(2) Gargling the mouth.
(3) Rinsing the nostrils, as is done during ablution and bath (this is referred to as "istinshāq" in the Ahādīth.
(4) Brushing the teeth with a twig (miswāk).
(5) Combing a path through one's hair

The five relevant to the rest of the body are:

(1) Paring the nails.
(2) Shaving the pubic hair.
(3) Circumcision.
(4) Removing underarm hair.
(5) Washing with water after answering the call of nature.

Bukhari (*p.473*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام circumcised himself at the age of 80, at a place called Qadūm."

Sayyidina Sā'īd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه reports that Allāh's friend Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was the first person to entertain guests, the first to circumcise himself, the first person to trim his moustache and the first to have white hair appear on his face. When he noticed it, he asked, "Oh my Lord! What is this?" Allāh replied, "This is reverence (i.e. a means of securing reverence from others)." Upon hearing this, he said, "Oh Allāh! Increase my reverence." [*Mu'atta of Mālik*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also mentioned that six of the commands issued to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام concerned the physical body, while the other four pertain to Hajj. Those concerning the body were:

1. *Removing pubic and under arm hair.*
2. *Circumcision.*
3. *Paring the nails.*
4. *Trimming the moustache.*
5. *Brushing the teeth with a Miswāk.*
6. *Taking a bath on Fridays.*

The injunctions pertaining to Hajj were

1. *Making Tawāf around the ka'ba.*
2. *Walking between Safa and Marwa.*
3. *Stoning the Jamarāt'*
4. *Performing the Tawāfuz Ziyārah.*

A fourth interpretation of the commands by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه are that they were 30 in total. Ten are mentioned in verse 112 of Surah Tauba, where Allāh says, *"Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise (Allāh), those who fast, those who bow {in bowing (rukū)}, those who prostrate (in sajdah) those who enjoin good, those who forbid from evil and those who maintain the limits set by Allāh. Convey the glad tidings to the believers."*

The other ten are mentioned in Surah Ma'ārij and at the beginning of Surah Mu'minūn. The other ten are mentioned in verse 35 of Surah Ahzāb. After omitting the repetitions in this verse of Surah Tauba, the commands in the verse are as follows:

1) *Making Taubah (repenting for one's sins).*
2) *Worshipping Allāh.*
3) *Praising Allāh.*
4) *Fasting.*
5) *Making bowing (ruku) (the bowing posture of Salāh).*
6) *Making sajdah (prostration).*
7) *Enjoining what is good.*
8) *Forbidding from evil.*
9) *Taking care not to transgress the limits set by Allāh.*

There are nine commands in this verse, although Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه as saying that there are ten. In my humble opinion, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also included the preceding verse (*verse 111 of Surah Taubah*) in his count often. The verse reads, *"Indeed Allāh has purchased from the believers their lives and wealth so*

that they may have Heaven (Jannah). They fight in Allāh's path, slaying and being slain." This verse includes the command of striving in Allāh's way, which completes the count of ten.

Surah Mu'minūn contains the following commands

1) *Humility in Salāh.*
2) *Abstaining from futility*
3) *Paying zakāh.*
4) *Safeguarding the private organs.*
5) *Safeguarding trusts.*
6) *Fulfilling pledges.*
7) *Steadfastness in Salāh.*

Surah Ma'ārij contains the above seven commands, together with another three to complete ten. The additional three are

8) *Stipulating a portion of one's wealth for the needy and beggars.*
9) *Fearing Allāh's punishment.*
10) *Giving accurate testimony*

The commands contained in Surah Ahzāb are

1) *Fulfilling the acts of Islām.*
2) *Believing with the heart*
3) *Being obedient.*
4) *Being true in word and deed.*
5) *Being perseverant in carrying out Allāh's commands and when faced with difficulties.*
6) *Being humble.*
7) *Spending in charity.*
8) *Fasting.*
9) *Safeguarding one's private parts.*
10) *Engaging in excessive dhikr (remembrance of Allāh)*

Many of the commands mentioned here also appear in the verse of Surah Mu'minūn. Adopting humility, as mentioned in the verse of Surah Ahzāb, denotes humility in all facets of life and not only in Salāh. Therefore, one should be humble in one's deeds and in dealings with others. The limbs should be humble in the sense that they should never perpetrate any deed in opposition to Allāh's laws.

The word 'sā'ihūn' may be translated as those who fast, as well as those who fight in Allāh's way. According to Sayyidina Ikrima رحمة الله عليه it refers to those students who travel to seek religious knowledge.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also mentioned that the commands received by Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام could be:

- *Separating from his people for Allāh 's sake.*
- *Debating with the tyrant Nimrūd about Tauhīd, thereby Asking his life.*

- *Migrating from his homeland to (Shām) Syria.*
- *Entertaining guests on Allāh's behalf and spending his wealth for the same purpose.*
- *Slaughtering his son. He not only accepted the command but even went to the extent of attempting to cut his son's throat. However Allāh replaced the boy with a ram.*

When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام passed all these tests, Allāh told him, *"Submit!' He replied, "I submit to the Lord of the universe."*

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has mentioned the above discourse in his *(tafsīr)* exegesis, was which we have added some additional information. Thereafter, he goes on to quote the interpretations of Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه about the commands issued to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. He also adds another interpretation of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, in which he mentions that the commands refer to all the verses mentioned before and after the verse. This is also the opinion of Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه also quotes Allāma Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه as saying that all the interpretations rendered by the various commentators apply to the verse. It will only be possible to restrict the meaning of *"words"* when an authentic hadith mentions a specific explanation.

However, since no authentic Ahādīth to this effect can be traced, one cannot restrict the meaning of the verse. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه then says that the opinion of Allāma Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه seems most appropriate and correct.

THE LEADERSHIP OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

"Allāh said, 'I am to make you a leader for the people." Commentators mention that the leadership conferred on him was a prize for fulfilling the various commands. Allāh tested him with these tasks to prepare him for the position of leadership.

Allāh granted him leadership by conferring the mantle of Risālat (prophethood) on him, by revealing certain booklets to him, and making leaders from amongst his progeny. Consequently, all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام after him were from his progeny and they were all commanded to follow his creed. This command was given to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his ummah as well (as mentioned clearly in the Qur'ān).

Although all the laws of Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام Shari'ah were not found in the Dīns *(Religion's)* of Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام after him, many of them were. This discussion is based on the interpretation of Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام leadership being permanent. However, it is also possible to assume that the leadership mentioned was a temporary one, restricted to the people of his time.

If this leadership refers to Risālat (prophethood), some of the commands mentioned above will not apply because they occurred only after Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام became a Prophet, e.g. slaughtering his son. This only happened after he became a Prophet and will therefore not fall under the interpretation of

the *"words"* that Allāh tested Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام with. This is so because the leadership was a reward that came after fulfilment of the *'words'*. [*Ruhul Ma'āni, v.1, p.3 75*]

"Ibrahīm said, *'And from my progeny* (will they also receive leadership)?' *Allāh replied, 'My covenant will not reach the oppressors."* If leadership refers to Risālat (prophethood), then the "oppressors" will refer to the Infidels *(kuffār)*, as Allāh says in a verse, *'The Infidels (kuffār) are oppressors indeed'* [*Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 254*]

This verse denotes that Infidels *(kuffār)* did exist in the progeny of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and that Risālat (prophethood) is not hereditary. Allāh grants Risālat (prophethood) to whomsoever He wills.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا ٱلْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَٱتَّخِذُوا۟ مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ وَعَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَـٰعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِىَ لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَٱلْعَـٰكِفِينَ وَٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿125﴾

(125) When We made the House (Ka'ba) a gathering place for people and a place of peace. Take the station of Ibrahīm as a place of Salāh. We commanded Ibrahīm and Isma'īl (saying), "Purify My house for those who perform Tawāf those who remain secluded therein and those who bow (in ruku) and prostrate."

THE KA'BA IS MADE A PLACE FOR GATHERING AND PEACE.

The detailed story of how Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was commanded to leave his wife and child in the desert of Makkah will be narrated in Surah Ibrahīm, Insha Allāh. The above verse merely mentions that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his son Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام were commanded to clean the Ka'ba after building it.

Allāh says that the Ka'ba is a 'mathābah' (translated above as *"place of gathering"*). The word is derived from the root word 'thāba,' which means 'to return.' Therefore, the literal translation of the word 'mathābah' will be 'a place of return.' Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and others have mentioned that it has been named thus because people always go to the Ka'ba, make Tawāf, and then return to their homes. In this manner, people return time and time again because they are never completely satisfied. Other commentators have translated it as a 'place of gathering' because people from all over the world gather there.

Thereafter, Allāh describes it as a *"place of peace."* Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān (*verse 97*), *"Whoever enters it will be safe."* Even during the period of ignorance, people regarded the Ka'ba as a place of safety and people entering therein were assured safety. When the Arabs used to fight each other, they took heed not to touch the residents of Makkah.

Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"Do they not see that We have made the Haram a place of safety whereas people are snatched away around them. Do they believe in falsehood while being ungrateful for Allāh 's bounties. "* [*verse 67*]

Fighting is not permitted in the Haram because it is a place of safety.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) that it is not permissible for any person to brandish any weapon within the Haram. [*Muslim, v.1, p.439*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Killing in the Haram has not been permitted for anyone before me. It has also not been allowed for me except for a brief portion of the day (when the Muslims conquered Makkah). Makkah is sacred and its sanctity will remain till Judgment day *(Qiyamah)*." [*Bukhari*]

According to Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, a person who seeks refuge in the Haram after murdering someone outside the Haram, will be forced to leave the Haram before he can be executed. He may be forced to leave by denying him food and drink. [*Ruhul Ma'āni v.1, p.378*]

It is also not permissible to hunt any animals within the Haram. One is prohibited from cutting any trees, plants and even thorns in the Haram. The details of this are found in Bukhari, Muslim, and in the books of Islāmic jurisprudence.

"Take the station of Ibrahīm as a place of Salāh." There are various interpretations about the "Maqām Ibrahīm" ("The station of Ibrahīm"). It is commonly believed that it is a rock whereupon Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام stood when constructing the Ka'ba. It served as a ladder for him as the building heightened. Standing on this rock, he built the Ka'ba, while his son, Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام passed the bricks and mortar to him.

After completing the construction, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام joined this rock to the wall adjoining the door of the Ka'ba, where it remained for centuries. However, during the Caliphate *(khilafah)* of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, floods caused it to dislocate from its position, after which he had it placed where it stands today i.e. apart from the Ka'ba.

It should be noted that the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنه were still alive during the Caliphate *(khilafah)* of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. Since none objected to his action, they must have all consented to it. Then too, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was amongst the righteous Caliph *(khalifa)* {righteous caliphs Khulafa-e-Rāshidīn}, regarding whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Adhere strictly to my practices and the practices of the Khulafa-e- Rāshidīn."

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Follow the two after me, (viz.) Abu Bakr and Umar.' [*Tirmidhi*]

One of the great benefits of moving the location of the Station of Ibrāhīm *(Maqām Ibrahīm)* is that it creates more space for people to perform Tawāf when others are engaged in Salāh behind the Station of Ibrāhīm *(Maqām Ibrahīm)*. This is especially beneficial in today's times when the number of people performing Tawāf has reached phenomenal proportions.

For a long while, the Station *(Maqām)* was surrounded by four walls and remained locked. The present government has placed it in a glass enclosure so that it is visible. The footprint of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام can be clearly seen imprinted on it. [*Muslim, v.1, p.395*]

After performing the Tawāf during the farewell hajj, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood before the Station *(Maqām)* and recited the verse, *"Take the station of Ibrāhīm as a place of Salāh."* He then performed two rakāhs of Salāh in such a manner that the Station *(Maqām)* was between himself and the Ka'ba. In these two rakāhs he recited Surah Kāfirūn and Ikhlās.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه reports that he once told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that it would be excellent if the Station *(Maqām)* was made a place of Salāh. Thereupon, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Take the station of Ibrahīm as a place of Salāh." [Bukhari, v.2,, p.644]*

Performing two rakāhs of Salāh after Tawāf is wājib *(compulsory)*. Although it may be performed anywhere within the Masjidul Harām, it is best to perform it behind the Station *(Maqām)*.

THE COMMAND TO PURIFY THE KA'BA.

"We commanded Ibrahīm and Isma'īl (saying), 'Purify.' My house for those who perform Tawāf those who remain secluded therein and those who bow *(ruku)*, and prostrate " Although the purification of the Ka'ba is mentioned, the verse denotes that the entire Masjidul Harām be kept clean because the various actions of Salāh, Tawāf and Itikāf (seclusion within the Mosque *(Masjid)* take place there).

Purity of the place refers to physical and spiritual purity. The Ka'ba and Masjidul Harām are to be purged of infidelity *(Kufr)*, Polytheism *(shirk)* and all acts of irreligiousness. Idol-worship, lying, stealing and all other sins must also be eradicated from the area.

Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه has interpreted the word 'ākifīn' (translated above as *"those who remain secluded therein"* to refer to the residents of Makkah. Sayyidina Atā رحمة الله عليه says that the word refers to those people who come to Makkah from other places and stay in the Masjidul Harām. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says, "Whenever we enter the Masjidul Harām and sit therein, we are in the regarded as "ākifīn.' Those people who remain in the Masjidul Harām for Seclusion *(Itikāf)* are also implied by the verse

"those who bow (ruku) and prostrate" refers to those who perform Salāh in the Haram.

THE REWARD OF PERFORMING TAWĀF

Tirmidhi reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who circumambulates the Ka'ba (*makes Tawāf*), counting properly that he has completed seven circuits, shall receive the reward of setting a slave free.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that, for every step placed down and for every one lifted, a good deed is added to the records of a person and a sin is erased.

THE REWARD OF PERFORMING SALĀH IN THE MASJIDUL HARĀM

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The reward of one Salāh in my

Mosque (*Masjid*) (*Masjidun Nabawi*) is a thousand times superior to another Salāh, with the exception of Salāh performed in the Masjidul Harām. Salāh in the Masjidul Harām is a hundred thousand times superior than Salāh performed elsewhere." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb, v.2,, p.214*]

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَـٰذَا بَلَدًا ءَامِنًا وَٱرْزُقْ أَهْلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُم بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ ۖ قَالَ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُۥ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُۥٓ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٢٦﴾

(126) When Ibrahīm said, "Oh my Lord! Make this a city of peace and sustain its inhabitants with fruit, such of them as believe in Allāh and the Last Day." Allāh said, "I shall grant a brief profit for him who disbelieves, thereafter I will drive him to the punishment of the Fire. It is the worst of abodes."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام PRAYS FOR THE INHABITANTS OF MAKKAH

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed to Allāh saying, *"Oh my Lord! Make this a city of peace"* As a result of this Supplication *(du'ā)*, Allāh made Makkah a place of peace and security. He also prayed to Allāh saying, *"and sustain its inhabitants with fruit, such of them as believe in Allāh and the Last Day."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام excluded the Infidels *(kuffār)* from this Supplication *(du'ā)* because Allāh had already told him earlier, *"My covenant will not reach the oppressors."* However, Allāh sustains believers and Infidels *(kuffār)* alike. However, the profits of the Hereafter are reserved exclusively for the Believers. For this reason Allāh replied to Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام Supplication *(du'ā)* by saying, *"I shall grant a brief profit for him who disbelieves (as well), whereafter I will drive him to the punishment of the Fire. It is the worst of abodes"*

Sayyidina Ismā'il عليه السلام lived in Makkah together with the other believers. However, after some time, people resorted to idol-worship and became Polytheists. They even placed their idols inside the Ka'ba. If Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام Supplication *(du'ā)* was accepted as he had made it, the people of Makkah would have slaved when they became Polytheists. However, Allāh continued to provide for them.

THE FRUITS OF THE WORLD REACH MAKKAH

Allāh accepted the Supplication *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and caused the fruits of the entire world to reach Makkah for the benefit of the residents and the outsiders. Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"Have We not settled them in a peaceful Haram, to which the fruits of everything is attracted. This is by way of sustenance from Us, but most of them do not know.'* [*verse 57*]

Close to Makkah is a fertile place called *Tā'if,* which supplies Makkah with various fruits. Fruits from all over the world are also imported to Makkah, and one can scarcely imagine any fruit that has not reached Makkah.

Many commentators have mentioned that the word *'fruit"* is not restricted to the fruit that grows on trees. They say that the word also refers to the 'fruit' of machines and factories i.e. their manufactured products. One will notice that every type of manufactured article is available in Makkah even though the area barely has any industries.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم PRAYS FOR MADINAH

Muslim (*v.1, p.442*) reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه that the first fruit of the season was always presented first to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Thereupon he would pray to Allāh thus: "Oh Allāh! Bless us in our fruits, bless us in our city, bless us in our 'saa' and bless us in our 'mudd' (the 'saa' and the 'mudd' were measures of weight during that time). Oh Allāh Ibrahım عليه السلام was Your friend, bondsman and messenger. I am also Your bondsman and messenger. Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed for Makkah and I pray for Madinah. Grant for Madinah whatever Ibrahīm عليه السلام asked for Makkah, and double of it." Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would call for the smallest child and give the fruit to him/her.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed thus: "Oh Allāh! Grant Madinah twice the blessings You gave to Makkah." [*Muslim, v.1, p.442*]

The Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Prayer (Du'ā) was accepted and it can be clearly seen today that Madinah receives twice as much as fruit, food and commercial commodities that Makkah receives.

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ ٱلْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿127﴾ رَبَّنَا وَٱجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿128﴾

(127) When Ibrahīm and Ismā'īl raised the foundation of the House (Ka'ba), (they prayed) "Oh our Lord! Accept from us. Indeed You are the All Hearing, the All Knowing. (128) "Oh our Lord! Make us subservient to You and make from our progeny a nation that is subservient to You. Show us our rites and accept our repentance. Without doubt, You are the Most Pardoning, the Most Merciful"

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM AND ISMA'ĪL عليه السلام CONSTRUCT THE KA'BA.

The angels originally constructed the Ka'ba. Later, when its walls were brought down by floods during the time of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, its location then became unrecognisable. When Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Ismā'īl عليه السلام were charged with the task of reconstructing the Ka'ba, Allāh sent an angel to show its location to them

Allāh refers to this when He says, *"When We showed Ibrahīm the location of the*

house" [*Surah Hajj, verse 26*] The area presently outside the Ka'ba called the Hatīm was originally part of the Ka'ba itself. However, five years before the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم apostleship, the Quraish rebuilt the Ka'ba but ran short of funds. Therefore, they could not complete the construction but merely built a short semi-circular wall to denote the actual extent of the Ka'ba. This demarcated area is called the Hatīm and has no roof

Muslim (*v.1, p.429*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها, 'If it were not for the fact that your people were new Muslims, I would have broken the Ka'ba down and reconstructed it according to the design of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. The door would then be on ground level and the Hijr (*Hatīm*) would be part of the building." Another narration reports that the design of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had two doors.

However, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left the Ka'ba as it was built by the Quraish. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubair رضى الله عنه later reconstructed the Ka'ba according to the original plan of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام but the notorious Hajāj bin Yusuf razed this building to the ground and had it rebuilt according to the design of the Quraish.

When the Caliph *(Khalifa)* Hārūn Ar-Rashīd رحمة الله عليه requested advice from Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه to rebuild the Ka'ba as it was built by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubair رضى الله عنه, Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه said, "Oh Caliph (*Khalifa*) Do not make the Ka'ba a toy for every king, so that they can all demolish it and reconstruct it. Its sanctity will then vanish from peoples' hearts."[*Nawawi in the commentary of Muslim, v.1, p.429*]

Bukhari (*v.1, p.476*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام told his son Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام, 'Allāh has commanded me to fulfil a task." Sayyidina Ism'īl عليه السلام replied, "You will have to obey the command." "Will you assist me?" asked Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. "Certainly," replied the son. Thereafter, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام pointed to an elevated site saying, "Allāh has commanded me to erect a house there."

Consequently, father and son set to work. Sayyidina Ismā'īl عليه السلام passed the material to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, who built the walls. When the walls grew higher, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام began to use the Station (*Maqām*) as a ladder. As they built, the two continuously recited the Prayer (Du'ā) , *"Oh our Lord! Accept from us. Indeed You are the All Hearing, the All Knowing."*

Despite the fact that both were Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام carrying out the task with complete sincerity, they pleaded to Allāh to accept their efforts. This teaches us to pray always for acceptance from Allāh even though the deed is done with sincerity. One never knows when pride or ostentation may creep into the intention. Allāh speaks about such sincere people in the Qur'ān, who constantly fear that their deeds may be rejected.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports that once Sayyidina Wahb bin Al Wird رحمة الله عليه wept upon reciting the verse, *"When Ibrāhīm and Ismā'īl raised the foundation of the House (Ka'ba),* (they prayed) *"Oh our Lord! Accept from us. Indeed You are the All Hearing, the All Knowing."* He then prayed, "Oh Merciful! Your friend is building Your House fearing that the deed will not be accepted

(whereas we think that our small efforts are accepted)."

Sayyidina Ibrāhīm and Isma'īl عليه السلام also prayed to Allāh thus: *"Oh our Lord! make us subservient to You' It is the trait of a believer that he prays to Allāh to preserve his belief and obedience."*

THE PRAYER FOR A SUBSERVIENT NATION

The illustrious father and son also made the following Prayer (Du'ā) : *"and make from our progeny a nation that is subservient to You."* Certain commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made this particular Prayer (Du'ā) because when Allāh told him, *'My covenant will not reach the oppressors,"* he realised that all of his progeny will not be believers.

Commentators mention that the Prayer (Du'ā) was for the Arabs, who were the progeny of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام via Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. A believer *(Mu'min)* should always be concerned about the plight of his future generations and pray to Allāh to preserve Islām in their lives as well.

Describing the qualities of the Believers, Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"Those who say, "Oh our Lord! Accord to us the coolness of our eyes from our spouses and children, and make us leaders of the pious."* [*verse* 74]

Allāh says in Surah Tahrīm, *"Oh you who believe, save yourselves and your families from the fire"* [*verse* 6]

PRAYING FOR THE RITES OF HAJJ

Another Prayer (Du'ā) that the two eminent Prophets made was. *"Show us our rites and accept our repentance. Without doubt, You are the Most Pardoning, the Most Merciful.'* Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes (*v.1, p.183*) that after Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had completed the Ka'ba, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام took him by the hand to Mount Safa and Mount Marwa, telling him that these two are from Allāh's signs (see commentary of verse 158 of Surah Al-Baqarah). Thereafter, he took him to Mina, and then to Muzdalifa, where he was told that it was called the "Mash'arul Harām" (see commentary of verse 198 of Surah Al-Baqarah). Sayyidina Jibr'īl عليه السلام then took Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to Arafah, where he taught him the rites of the Hajj.

Thereafter, he thrice asked Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام whether he understood the rites of the hajj, whereupon Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام confirmed that he did. Thereafter, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام announced the hajj to people, as Allāh says to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام in Surah Hajj, *"Announce the Hajj amongst the people"* [*verse* 27]

People believing in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* continued to perform the hajj thereafter. Eventually, when the Polytheists rose, they contaminated these rites with acts of Polytheism *(shirk)* and even altered the months of hajj. They performed Tawāf naked and never went to Arafāh, but returned after spending time only in Muzdalifa.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conquered Makkah, he put an end to these ignorant customs and announced that none shall ever again perform Tawāf naked, and that no Polytheist *(Mushrik)* must ever perform the hajj. In the 9th

year after Hijrah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed what was termed "The Farewell Hajj *(Hujjatul Widā),*" during the course of which he taught people the proper rites of hajj saying, "Learn the rites of hajj from me."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also told the people on that occasion, 'Stay at your places where your people used to stay because you are the successors of your father, Ibrahīm عليه السلام." [*Mishkāt, p. 228*]

Any person proceeding for hajj or Umrah must be acquainted with the relevant laws and injunctions. It is tragic to note that some people nowadays pay no heed to the regulations and then scorn those who correct them.

رَبَّنَا وَٱبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿129﴾

(129) "Oh our Lord! Send among them a messenger from their midst who will recite Your verses to them, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Without doubt, You are the Mighty, the Wise."

THE PRAYER FOR A MESSENGER AMONG THE PEOPLE OF MAKKAH IS ACCEPTED

Among the prayers that Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Isma'īl عليهم السلام made when constructing the Ka'ba was that Allāh should send a Prophet from among the Arabs. This Supplication *(du'ā)* was accepted and Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who was an Arab from Makkah. He was also from the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Isma'īl عليهم السلام. Whereas all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* after Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام belonged to the lineage of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the only Prophet from the lineage of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام.

The "Musnad Ahmad" reports that Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when mention was first made of him. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "I was the Supplication (du'ā) of my father Ibrahīm عليه السلام, the glad tiding of Isa عليه السلام and the manifestation of the dream that my mother saw where a light emerged from her and illuminated the palaces of syrīa." [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.184*]

This hadith has also been narrated in "Mishkāt" *(p. 513)* with the addition that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم mother saw that dream when she was delivered him. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم meant that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was the first person to make mention of him in his Supplication. Thereafter all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام till the last of them [viz. Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام] conveyed the glad tidings of the Holy Prophets صلى الله عليه وسلم advent to the people.

In Surah Saff, Allāh quotes Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام saying to the Bani Isrā,īl *"And I convey to you the glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad.'* [*verse 6*]

When giving birth to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his mother saw a dream wherein a bright light emerged from within her and spread towards Syria, illuminating the palaces there. She related this dream to the people, which served as an introduction to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Prophethood.

The advent of the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was announced by both Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام. His other name was Ahmad as mentioned by Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام in the foregoing verse. Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as the final Prophet to mankind, as mentioned in verse 40 of Surah Ahzāb. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned, "There shall be no Prophet after me"

He said in another narration, *'The Prophets (Anbiya) have ended with me."* Another narration contains the words, "Risālat (prophethood) and apostleship have been sealed with me. There will therefore be no Prophet after me. [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is commanded to say in Surah A'rāf, *"Oh people! I am Allāh's Prophet to all of you."* [*Verse. 158*]

THE QUALITIES OF THE PROPHET *(NABI)* THEY PRAYED FOR

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed thus, *"Oh our Lord! Send amongst them a messenger from their midst who will recite Your verses to them, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Without doubt, You are the Mighty, the Wise."* These tasks of the Prophet have also been mentioned in verse 164 of Surah Āl Imrān and verse 2 of Surah Jumu'ah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fulfilled all these tasks to perfection.

RECITATION OF THE BOOK

The first task of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is mentioned as *"recite Your verses to them"* This part of the verse makes it clear that the recitation of the words of the Qur'ān to people was from amongst the primary tasks of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Regrettably, there are some *Muslims* who foolishly claim that it is a futile effort to make children memorise the Qur'ān "like parrots". They fail to perceive the grandeur of Allāh's word. They regard the Qur'ān as the letters and books authored by man, and say that merely understanding the meaning of the words is sufficient.

They do not realize that the preservation of the words of the Qur'ān is an obligatory task that at least a part of the Muslim ummah must undertake sufficiency obligation *(Fardh Kifāyah)*. It is of utmost importance that the Qur'ān is preserved not only in writing, but also in memory so that the Qur'ān is not lost if the scripts should ever be lost to man, or adulterated in any way.

THE VIRTUE OF RECITING THE QUR'ĀN

Tremendous rewards are attained by merely reciting the words of the Qur'ān without even understanding the meaning. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh says, For the person who is unable to engage in My *dhikr* (remembrance) and from

supplicating to Me because of his involvement with the Qur'ān, I shall grant him a greater prize than that which I confer on those who engage in My Dhikr and in supplication to Me." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Masūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever will recite a single letter of the Qur'ān will receive the reward of a good deed for every letter recited, and every good deed is multiplied ten times. I do not say that *'Alif Lām Mīm'* is one letter, but *Alif* is one letter, *Lām* is one letter, and *Mīm* is another letter." [*Tirmidhi, p. 413*]

These Ahādīth prove that it is wrong to associate the recitation of the Qur'ān to the mimicry of a parrot. Reciting the Qur'ān is a task on its own, memorising the Qur'ān is another, and understanding the meaning of the Qur'ān based on the interpretation of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم and the pious predecessors is another separate task. Deducing laws from the Qur'ānic verses is yet another responsibility. The ummah followers is responsible for all these tasks.

Those people who claim that it is unnecessary to memorise the Qur'ān have not learnt their lesson from the experience of the Jews and Christians. They lost their scriptures because they did not pay heed to its preservation. Although their scriptures are available in a variety of languages, the original scripture is absent. Since there is no original with which to compare the translations, the route to interpolation and adulteration was left clear.

I (the compiler of this Tafsīr) once met a person in the Masjidun Nabawi, whose son had commenced memorising the Qur'ān. He told me that one of his teachers mentioned to him that there was no necessity nowadays to memorise the Qur'ān because the Qur'ān was already on computer. I asked him whether these computers would lead the Tarawīh Salāh, and whether every one of the many Mosques (Masājid) found in every rural and rustic town will be able to afford the installation of a computer to install in their Mosques *(masājid)*? I also asked him if there will be someone to train these simple village people how to operate the computers?

The purpose of memorising the Qur'ān is not to identify which verse appears in which Surah, or what the exact wording of a verse is. One of the most fundamental purposes of the Qur'ān is that it should be recited and heard. This is an extremely effective means of drawing closer to Allāh. Those who are duped by the Infidels *(kuffār)* to believe that the recitation of the Qur'ān is futile are depriving themselves of a great boon. May Allāh guide them all. Āmīn.

TEACHING THE "BOOK AND WISDOM"

The next task of Risālat (prophethood) is described as *"teach them the Book and wisdom"* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was thus entrusted with the task of teaching the Muslims the meaning of the Qur'ān. Merely understanding the Arabic language is not sufficient to grasp the meaning of the Qur'ān. The only reliable interpretation of the Qur'ān is that which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained to the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنه, and which was then transmitted to the ummah followers by the trustworthy and pious sages of the ummah. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"We have revealed the Reminder (Qur'ān) to you*

so that you may expound to the people what has been revealed to them." [*verse* 44]

Unfortunately, there are some people nowadays who venture to interpret the Qur'ān without consulting the interpretations of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They wander astray and drag others along to the same abyss of deviation. They foolishly say that the Qur'ān is a letter from Allāh, which He sent with a postman, referring to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They maintain that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم task was only to pass the message along and not to elucidate the contents.

The Qur'ān does not assert that it is a message to the creation which they should interpret without the help of the messenger, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Contrary to this, the Qur'ān makes it clear that one of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم specific responsibilities was to teach people the meaning of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān also commands people to follow and obey him.

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p. 116*) that *"the Book"* refers to the Qur'ān while *"wisdom"* refers to the understanding of the Qur'ān [according to Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه]. Some commentators have mentioned that *"wisdom"* refers to judicial laws, while others maintain that it refers to knowledge that is coupled with practice.

Rūhul Ma'āni (*v.1, p.387*) reports from other commentators that *'wisdom"* denotes the details and intricacies of the Qur'ān and everything that is contained in the Qur'ān. According to this interpretation, *"the Book"* will refer to understanding the Qur'ānic words and the manner of pronouncing them.

Other commentators have interpreted *"wisdom"* to mean all the laws and sciences by which the soul is perfected. All the various interpretations are not contradictory because the word can refer to all of these simultaneously.

PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL

The third task of Risālat (prophethood) is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has to *"purify"* people. The literal meaning of the Arabic word 'tazkiya' is to purify or cleanse something. By teaching the Qur'ān and 'wisdom' to people, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم beautified their souls with gems of wisdom and knowledge. However, it was also necessary that the soul be purified and cleansed from infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)* so that the-jewels of Belief *(Imān)* may decorate it.

The soul also needs to be purified from all sins and doubts about faith so that it may be led to noble character and good conduct. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught people the details about spiritual maladies like hatred, greed, jealousy, miserliness, love of material possessions, etc. He also educated them about the virtues of good habits like maintaining cordial ties with others, generosity, compassion, sympathy, etc. He taught man how to behave like men and stay clear of bestiality.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'I have been sent to perfect good character.' Since theoretical information is not sufficient for perfecting character, Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a human being so that others could associate with him and learn from his practical behaviour.

Allāh says in Surah Tauba (*verse 119*), *"Oh you who believe, fear Allāh and be with the truthful."* This verse instructs the Believers to associate with people who are truthful in their intentions and deeds. Association with such people encourages one to emulate their good behaviour and to understand how to avoid Satan's *(Shaytān's)* deception.

When one seeks a pious person to associate with, one should judge whether the person fears Allāh and practises the sunnah lifestyle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. If the person is lacking in this, such a person should not be regarded as one's spiritual mentor.

وَمَن يَرْغَبُ عَن مِّلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَن سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ ۚ وَلَقَدِ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿130﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿131﴾

(130) Only the one who makes a fool of himself will turn away from the creed of Ibrahīm. We undoubtedly selected him in this world and he will be amongst the righteous in the Hereafter. (131) When his Lord told him, "Submit" He replied, "I submit to the Lord of the universe."

ONLY A FOOL WILL BE AVERSE TO THE CREED OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

People need to live by and die with the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, which embodies Tauhīd and abstinence from all types of Polytheism *(shirk)*. The person will then become physically and spiritually pure. It teaches sacrifice, hospitality, obedience, worship and an affinity with Allāh. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (and the ummah) in Surah Nahl saying, *"Then We sent revelation to you that Follow the creed of Ibrahīm that is averse from all other Dīn's (Religions). He was not from the idolators."* [*verse 123*]

The previous verses highlighted how Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام fulfilled the commands issued to him, how he became a leader of others and how his Supplication were accepted by Allāh. In the above verse Allāh states. *"Only the one who makes a fool of himself will turn away from the creed of Ibrahīm."* No sensible person will do so.

The creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام nowadays will refer to the Dīn *(religion)* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, i.e. Islām. The people who are averse to it are people who are generally polytheists, immoral, immodest, and perpetual sinners.

Although many Muslims are sinners, the difference between them and the infidels *(kuffār)* is that they realise that they are perpetrating sins and may resort to Tauba at some stage in their lives. Nevertheless, sins are regarded as acts of foolishness, as Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Allāh is only obliged to accept the repentance of those who perpetrate evil due to ignorance* (foolishness), *then forthwith*

repent.' [verse 17] Although sinful Muslims will also be regarded as foolish, their foolishness is of a lesser degree that that of the Infidels *(kuffār)*, who will never relent from their ways of faithlessness.

"We undoubtedly selected him [Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] *in this world"* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was revered in all the Dīn's *(Religion's)* after him and all the latter Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام were from his progeny. In his honour, Allāh made the raging fire a garden for him. He was granted the honour of constructing the glorious Ka'ba, which is visited and revered to this day. People still practise the hajj rites that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام taught him.

Thousands of years after his demise, people still honour him by emulating his sacrifice of his son and invoking Allāh's mercy and blessings on him during every Salāh (when reciting the Durūd Ibrahīm). He even named the ummah followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Muslims (refer to the commentary of verse 78 of Surah Hajj).

"...and he will be amongst the righteous in the Hereafter." Allāh has already guaranteed him prominence in the Hereafter. Since Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام has been granted this elevation in both the worlds, any sensible person will understand that his creed must certainly be a key to salvation. Only a fool will refuse to follow him.

THE MEANING OF ISLĀM

The literal meaning of Islām is 'to submit,' 'to surrender' i.e. for one's exterior and interior to be obedient to Allāh. A person who fits this description will be called a Muslim, the plural of which is Muslimūn or Muslimīn. There can be no greater honour than to be subservient to Allāh. It is for this reason that Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Isma'īl عليه السلام prayed thus when building the Ka'ba: *"Oh our Lord! Make us subservient to You* (i.e. Muslims) *and make from our progeny a nation that is subservient to You* (i.e. Muslims)."

"When his Lord told him, 'Submit.' He replied, 'I submit to the Lord of the universe," The command was to remain submissive before Allāh at all times, which Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام accepted. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام replied as he did to indicate that he submitted to Allāh because Allāh is the Lord of the universe. The creation owe it to Allāh to be submissive.

Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *'Say, I have been commanded to the first to submit and to never be from the idolators. Say, I fear the punishment of a terrible day if I disobey my Lord."* [verses 14 and 15]

A verse of Surah Āl Imrān says, *"Do they seek (a Dīn (Religion) other than Allāh's (Religion) Dīn when all within the heavens and the earth submit to Him willingly and unwillingly, and they will all be returned to Him?'* [verse 83]

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام submitted before Allāh, as did all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام They all called people to submit before Allāh and were all therefore callers to "Islām". The only differences between the various Dīn's *(Religion's)* were certain laws and details.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "All the Prophet's *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام

are step brothers with different mothers, having the same Dīn *(Religion).*" [Mishkāt, Pg. 509] the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called the Dīn *(Religion)* Islām because he was an Arab, whereas the other Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام may have termed it differently in their own languages.

Inviting the Emperor of Rome, Heraclius, to Islām, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wrote, *'Submit you will be safe and Allāh will grant you a double reward."* [*Bukhari, v.1, p.5*]

The Dīn *(Religion)* propagated by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is called Islām and it preaches subservience to Allāh. Allāh declares in verse 3 of Surah Mā'idah, *"This day I have perfected for you your Dīn (Religion), completed My bounty upon you and chosen Islām as your Dīn (religion)"*

Allāh says in verse 19 of Surah Āl Imrān, *'The only Dīn (Religion)* in Allāh's sight is Islām." Another verse states, *"Whoever follows a Dīn (religion) besides Islām, it will never be accepted from him and, in the Hereafter, he shall be amongst the losers."* [*Surah Āl Imrān, verse 85*]

Therefore, the purpose of a Muslim's life is to be submissive only to Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Oh you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims."* [*verse 102*]

The Dīn *(Religion)* of Islām requires that a person obeys Allāh. follows His book, the Qur'ān and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says, *"Whoever obeys the messenger, has obeyed Allāh."*

Many people claim to be Muslims but are not really so because they object to many injunctions of Islām and wish to make Islām subservient to their desires instead of submitting themselves.

ALL DĪNS *(RELIGIONS)* BESIDES ISLĀM ARE REJECTED.

The question may be asked that since Islām means submission to Allāh, it matters not what Dīn *(Religion)* a person follows as long as he submits to Allāh. The reply to this question is that submission to Allāh is only tangible when a person submits to what Allāh has revealed through His Prophets *(Anbiya).* عليهم السلام. The people of every era were constrained to follow the Prophet of their time and follow the teachings of the scripture sent at that time. Rejecting any of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام will constitute an act of infidelity *(Kufr)* and cannot be regarded as submission.

Therefore, it will be imperative for any person born after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to believe in him. follow him, and follow the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Dīn *(Religion)* which he brought. Every other Dīn *(Religion)* is regarded as infidelity *(Kufr).* How can a person who ascribes partners and children to Allāh be considered subservient to Him? Can people who flagrantly indulge in acts of immorality, bestiality, bribery, etc be regarded as being submissive to Allāh?

وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَـٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا

وَأَنتُم مُّسۡلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمۡ كُنتُمۡ شُهَدَآءَ إِذۡ حَضَرَ يَعۡقُوبَ ٱلۡمَوۡتُ إِذۡ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعۡبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِى قَالُواْ نَعۡبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ مُسۡلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

(132) Ibrahīm and Ya'qub enjoined their sons there with saying, "Oh my sons! Verily Allāh has chose,, this Dīn (Religion) for you, so die only as Muslims." (133) Or were you present when death presented itself before Ya'qub? when he asked his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They replied, "We will worship your Deity and the Deity of your forefathers Ibrahīm Isma'īl and Is'hāq Who is One Deity. We submit to him only.

THE INSTRUCTION TO FOLLOW THE CREED OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

Allāh says, *"Ibrahīm and Ya'qub* عليهما السلام *enjoined their sons therewith [i.e. to follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm* عليه السلام*] saying, 'Oh my sons! Verily Allāh has chosen this Dīn (Religion) for you, so die only as Muslims"* Allāma Wāhidi رحمة الله عليه writes in "Asbābun Nuzūl" that the Jews told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Do you not know that on his deathbed, Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام advised his sons to remain steadfast on Judaism?" Allāh refuted this statement by revealing the above verse.

Allāh asks the Jews who made this claim, "Or were you present when death presented itself before Ya'qūb?" They merely fabricated a fable in this regard to substantiate their false beliefs. The Dīn *(Religion)* of Judaism is based on the teachings of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام who was born thousands of years after Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام. Therefore, how could Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام advise his children to adhere to this Dīn *(Religion)*?

He advised his sons to follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, which is based on Tauheed. Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام asked his Sons, "What will you worship after me?' They replied, 'We will worship your Deity and the Deity of your forefathers Ibrahīm, Isma'īl and Is 'hāq, Who is One Deity. We submit to Him only."

When stubborn adherence to cultures and doctrines prevails, people fail to realise the truth. The Jews, with their belief in Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام as Allāh's son and their concealment of the truth, deviated very far from the original belief of their forefathers. This finally led them to reject even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم although they recognised him to be Allāh's true messenger.

Note 1: Sayyidina Is'hāq and Isma'īl عليه السلام were the sons of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was therefore not one of Sayyidina Ya'qub's عليه السلام forefathers, yet he is mentioned as being one of his forefathers in the verse.

Commentators mention that this verse denotes that a paternal uncle may also be termed to be a person's father. "Rūhul Ma'āni" reports a hadīth from Ibn

Abi Shayba رحمة الله عليه. wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Preserve my relation with regard to Abbās (my paternal uncle) because he is a remnant of my forefathers"*

Note 2: The advice that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام gave to their sons teaches us that a Muslim should be concerned about the beliefs and Dīn *(Religion)* of his progeny just as he is concerned about himself It will be grossly incorrect for parents to take their children to such countries or send them to such schools where they risk losing their belief *(Imān)*. Many people are deceived into thinking that sending their children to such places and institutions will ensure progress. However, they are exposing their children to the damnation of Hell.

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (134)

(134) That was a group who have passed. To their benefit will be the deeds they earned and to your benefit will be the deeds that you earn. You will not be questioned about what they did.

THE DECEPTIVE BELIEF OF THE JEWS THAT THEY ARE GUARANTEED SALVATION BECAUSE THEY ARE THE PROGENY OF THE PROPHETS *(ANBIYA)* عليهم السلام

The above verse refutes this false notion of the Jews by telling them that their forefathers have passed on with their deeds, which will only benefit themselves. Their deeds will not benefit those after them, just as the deeds of the latter generations will have no bearing on those who have passed on before them.

The Jews will suffer the evil consequences of their rejection of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Wishful thinking and pinning their hopes in the status of their forefathers will not assist them. Each person will have to answer for his/her own deeds.

Many Muslims today dwell under the same misconception that they will be guaranteed salvation because of their relationship to a certain saint or because they are from the family of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. There are also many false "saints" who deceive people into believing that they will definitely attain Heaven *(Jannah)* by simply pledging allegiance to them.

Bukhari (*v.2,, p.706*) reports that, standing atop Mount Safa, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned his relatives and the Quraish. After inviting them all to Islām, he turned to his uncle, Sayyidina Abbās رضى الله عنه saying, "Oh Abbās bin Abdul Muttalib! I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment.' Then, addressing his paternal aunt, he said, "Oh Safiyya! I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment" Thereafter, he turned to his own beloved daughter saying, "Oh Fātima, the daughter of Muhammad! You may ask me for whatever wealth I possess, but even I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment.'

In saying this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emphasised to them that only

their personal Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds will save them from punishment. They cannot rely on their relationship to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to come to their assistance should their deeds warrant Allāh's punishment. if this is the condition of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم closest relatives, how can others rely on their genealogy?

Muslim reports a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said. 'The lineage of a person cannot hasten him when his deeds have encumbered him." [*p.345*]

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ تَهْتَدُوا ۗ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

(135) They say, "Become Jews or Christians and you will be guided." Say, "Rather follow the creed of Ibrahīm, which is averse from all deviation. He was never from the idolators." (136) Say, "We believe in Allāh, whatever has been revealed to us and whatever was revealed to Ibrahīm, Isma'īl, Is'hāq, Ya'qub and their successors. And (we believe in) whatever was granted to Mūsa, Isa and what was granted to the prophet from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and we are subservient to Allāh."

THE COMMAND TO BELIEVE IN ALL OF ALLĀH'S PROPHETS AND SCRIPTURES

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1, p.140*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that a Jew by the name of Abdullāh bin Suriyya said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Guidance is only that upon which we are. So follow us, and be guided."* The Christians also said the same. In response to this statement, Allāh revealed the verse, *"They say, Become Jews or Christians and you will be guided.' Say, 'Rather follow the creed of Ibrahīm, which is averse from all deviation,'*

The verse commands that people should follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم propagated. It is the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم rather than the Jews and the Christians who adheres to Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام creed of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd).*

Another aspect of Belief *(Imān)* is that a person believes in all of Allāh's Prophets *(Anbiya)* and scriptures without exception. Rejecting any Prophet or scripture will render a person a infidel *(kāfir)*. Neither the Jews nor the Christians can ever claim to be rightly guided because they reject the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, while the Jews do not even acknowledge the Risālat (prophethood) of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام.

Many verses of the Qur'ān describe Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام as being "Hanīfa". Imām Rāghib رحمة الله عليه says that the root word (from which Hanīfa is

derived) means 'aversion from deviation to steadfastness.' Therefore, the person possessing this attribute will be one who is averse to all deviant ways and one who remains steadfast.

Durrul Manthūr (*v.1, p.104*) reports from Imām Ahmad رحمة الله عليه and the book "Adābul Mufrid" [*by Imām Bukhari* رحمة الله عليه], that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once asked about which Dīn *(Religion)* Allāh loved most. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied by saying that Allāh loves most that Dīn *(Religion)* which is averse to falsehood, adopts the truth and is easy to practise.

"He was never from the idolators." This assertion is made in numerous verses of the Qur'ān to impress upon peoples' minds that they cannot claim to be following Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام creed if they adopt practices of idolatry. Because certain practices of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام (like hajj, circumcision, hospitality) were still prevalent amongst the Arabs, they claimed to be his followers. However, because of their polytheistic practices and beliefs, they can never be true to their claim. They added polytheistic words to the words recited during hajj and even placed their idols within the Ka'ba. Therefore, they could never lay claim to being Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام followers.

The Jews also were polytheists because of their belief that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh's son. Allāh commands that Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام creed be followed, making it clear that the Dīn *(Religion)* followed by the Jews and Polytheists were far from Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام creed because he was never an idolator like them.

The word "Asbāt" (translated above as '*successors*') refers to the children of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. Although they were not all Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام, many amongst their progenies were. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام addressed the Bani Isrā'īl thus: *"(Remember) When Allāh made Prophets (Anbiya) and kings amongst you. And He gave you what He did not give to anyone else in the universe."* [*Surah Mā'idah, verse 201*].

Commentators mention that all the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام after Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام, with the exception of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, were the progeny of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. The ummah followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم accept all these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and are not unbelievers like the other ummahs. Despite the fact that the Jews and the Christians vilify the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Muslims never utter a word against the respect of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام.

فَإِنْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ مَآ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَوا۟ ۖ وَّإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِى شِقَاقٍ ۖ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿137﴾

(137) If they believe in what you believe, then they are rightly guided. If they turn away, then they are merely being contentious. Soon Allāh shall suffice for you against them. He is All Hearing, All Knowing.

THE ENEMIES OF ISLĀM ARE MERELY BEING DEFIANT BY NOT ACCEPTING ISLĀM

Addressing the Muslims and consoling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"if they* (the Infidels *(kuffār)*) *believe in what you believe, then they are rightly guided If they turn away, then they are merely being contentious."* They are merely seeking an excuse to oppose Islām because they are bent on doing so. However, *"Soon Allāh shall suffice for you against them. He is All Hearing, All Knowing."*

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims that they have nothing to fear from the Infidels *(kuffār)* because Allāh will assist them. Allāh will humiliate the Infidels *(kuffār)* in this world, and subject them to punishment in the Hereafter.

صِبْغَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ عَٰبِدُونَ (138)

(138) "Allāh has coloured us. Who can colour better than Allāh? And we are His worshippers."

"ALLĀH HAS COLOURED US"

'Asbābun Nuzūl' has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Christians used to baptise their children on the seventh day after birth using some coloured water. They considered this as a form of purification for their children and also regarded it as a substitute for circumcision. Only after this rite did they regard the child as a proper Christian.

Allāh refers to this practice in the above verse and makes it clear that only the colouring of Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds given by Allāh is what should be desired. No other colouring and baptism can be better than Allāh's colouring of a person with Belief *(Imān)*. Therefore, the Believers are exhorted to proclaim, *"Allāh has coloured us. Who can colour better than Allāh? And we are His worshippers."*

This announcement is a proclamation of steadfastness as Muslims. They will never forsake this divine colouring because none other can colour *a* person as Allāh *can*. The baptism practised nowadays is done with clear water with the same intention of purification. Although physical purity may be attained by it, spiritual cleanliness is not.

قُلْ أَتُحَآجُّونَنَا فِى ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ وَلَنَآ أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُخْلِصُونَ (139)

(139) Say, "Do you dispute with us about Allāh, when He is our Lord and your Lord? And when our deeds are to our benefit and your deeds for yours, and we are sincerely His?"

ALLĀH IS OUR LORD AND YOURS

The Jews and Christians disputed with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying that only their Dīn's *(Religion's)* were acceptable to Allāh. In this way, they deemed that Heaven *(Jannah)* was reserved for them. In the above verse, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them that their notions are incorrect because Allāh is the Lord to all of them alike. Each person should try to please Allāh by following the Dīn *(Religion)* Allāh sent at a particular time.

It is therefore imperative for every person after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to follow him. It is an exercise in futility to argue the matter because ultimately every person has to answer for his own deeds. Good deeds performed with Belief *(Imān)* will be rewarded, while sins and infidelity *(Kufr)* will attract the worst punishment.

أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَـٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَـٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَـٰرَىٰ ۗ قُلْ ءَأَنتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن كَتَمَ شَهَـٰدَةً عِندَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَـٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (140)

(140) Or do you say that Ibrahīm, Isma'īl, Is'hāq, Yā'qub and the successors were Jews or Christians? Say, "Have you more knowledge than Allāh?" Who can be more unjust than the one who conceals the evidence from Allāh, which he has with himself? Allāh is not unaware of what you do.

A DENIAL OF THE BELIEF OF THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS THAT SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM, ISMA'ĪL, IS'HĀQ عليهم السلام AND OTHERS WERE JEWS OR CHRISTIANS

While the Jews claimed that Sayyidina Ibrahīm, Isma'īl, Is'hāq, Ya'qub عليهم السلام and the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام after them were Jews, the Christians maintained that these illustrious souls were Christians. Allāh refutes their notion because all these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام were adherents to Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام creed.

The Torah and Judaism, as well as Christianity and the Injīl came only centuries after these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام. Therefore, it is farfetched to say that they were adherents to any of these Dīn's *(Religion)*. Allāh says, *"Say, Have you more knowledge than Allāh?"* Allāh has knowledge of everything and would know best that these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام were neither Jews, nor Christians.

"Who can be more unjust than the one who conceals the evidence from Allāh, which he has with himself?" The Jews and Christians were well aware of the fact that all the above Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام adhered to the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. However, they concealed this from the masses.

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Oh people of the book, why do you argue with regard to Ibrahīm* عليه السلام *when the Torah and Injīl were only revealed after him? Do*

you not understand? Lo! You are the ones who argued concerning those things that you had knowledge about, so why do you now argue regarding that about which you have no knowledge? Allāh knows and you know not. Ibrahīm عليه السلام *was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one abiding to the truth and subservient; never from the idolators."* [*verses 65, 66 and 67*]

Just as the Jews and Christians concealed the knowledge of the various Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام being adherents of the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, they also concealed the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, which was found in their scriptures.

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿141﴾

(141) That was a group who have passed. To their benefit will be the deeds they earned and to your benefit will be the deeds that you earn. You will not be questioned about what they did.

A WORD OF CAUTION TO THOSE WHO ARE BEGUILED BY THEIR LINEAGE

This verse has been repeated. The Jews are again warned that their lineage to the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام will not help them if their deeds warrant Allāh's punishment. Each person will be responsible for his/her own deeds and will not be questioned about the deeds of others.

Certain commentators have mentioned that, when the verse was mentioned the first time, it addressed the Jews. Allāh now repeats it to address the ummah followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They should also beware of falling into the same misconception.

PART TWO

(142) Soon the ignorant people will say: "What has caused them to turn away from the direction (of worship) which they were facing?" Say [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!, "To Allāh belongs the East and the West. He guides whomsoever He wills to the straight path."

ANSWERS TO THE OBJECTIONS RAISED BY THE IGNORANT ABOUT THE CHANGE OF QIBLA

A hadīth is reported in the exegesis of Qur'ān *(tafsīr)* 'Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1, p.141*) on the authority of Tirmidhi and Nasā'ī from Sayyidina Barā رضى الله عنه that upon arriving in Madinah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed Salāh facing Baitul Muqaddas for approximately sixteen to seventeen months. However, within his heart was the yearning to face towards the Ka'ba. While performing Salāh, he would turn his face towards the sky in anticipation of the order to face towards the Ka'ba. As a result of this Allāh revealed the verse *"Verily we see you (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) frequently lifting your gaze towards the heavens This revelation brought the command to face towards the Ka'ba in Salāh."*

"The ignorant ones' viz, the Jews now began to ask what had turned the Muslims away from the direction of Baitul Muqaddas towards the Ka'ba. Allāh gave the following reply, *"And to Allāh belongs the East and the West. He guides whomsoever He wills onto the straight path."* In the exegesis of Qur'ān *(tafsīr)* "Durrul Manthūr' a narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the first command to be abrogated was that of the Qibla. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah he faced towards Baitul Muqaddas in Salāh which was the Qibla of the Jews. This continued for seventeen months so that the Jews should accept Islām. Thereafter Allāh revealed the following verses, *'And to Allāh belongs the East and the West. He guides whomsoever He wills onto the straight path"* as well as the verse, *"Verily we see you (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم frequently raising your gaze towards the heavens."*

When the Qibla was changed to the Ka'ba, the Jews began to object and asked what had caused the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his companions رضى الله عنهم اجمعين to change their direction of worship (Qibla). Allāh instructed the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them that *"to Allāh belongs the East and the West"* so He reserves the privilege to instruct His worshippers to face whichever direction He pleases. No one has any authority to object to His divine decree. A believer is subservient to Allāh's laws and adheres to them. When he is instructed to face towards Baitul Muqaddas, then it is towards Baitul Muqaddas that he shall face. When he is instructed to face towards the Ka'ba, then it should be the Ka'ba towards which he should face.

Objecting to the change of Qibla is not an objection to the Muslims but, in fact, an objection to Allāh. The purpose of worship is subservience to Allāh and not merely facing a particular direction. Those who had raised the objection have been termed 'ignorant' because they do seem to realise towards whom their objection is directed. In their blindness they cannot comprehend the seriousness of their objection. Being upon the *"Sirātul Mustaqīm" (Straight Path)* requires adherence to Allāh's commandments, all of which are filled with wisdom. There was divine wisdom in facing towards Baitul Muqaddas just as there exists wisdom in facing towards the Ka'ba. Allāh had selected his servants for guidance and these are the ones who follow His orders and enact them without question. The enemies of Islām are far away from the *"Sirātul Mustaqīm" (Straight Path)* and will always disapprove of Allāh's injunctions and wisdom. Their ignorance is self-evident. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (v.2, p.3) states, 'The aforementioned distinction of divine guidance is solely reserved by Allāh for those whom He chooses from amongst His bondsmen. All praise and thanks are due to Him for selecting"

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

(143) Thus we have made you such a group that is moderate in nature so that you may be witness over the people and the messenger a witness over you.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE UMMAH OF MUHAMMAD صلى الله عليه وسلم OVER THE OTHER NATIONS

Up to this point the discussion concerning the change of Qibla ensued. Mention is now made of the excellence of the ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The meaning of the verse is that just as the Muslims have been accorded the best of Qiblas, so too have they been made a nation of moderation and the best of all nations. The distinction of this ummah followers will be apparent on the Plain of Resurrection when they will testify against all other rebellious nations after which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will attest to their veracity, thereby confirming their testimony.

THE TESTIMONY OF THIS UMMAH AGAINST OTHERS AND ITS VALIDITY.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'id Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم said "On the Day of judgment, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام will be summoned and asked whether he had propagated the message, to which he will reply in the affirmative. Thereafter his nation will be questioned as to whether he had brought the message to them. They will deny it, saying that no warner had come to them. Then Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام will be asked as to who will recommend his word. He will reply, *"Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah."* After saying this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed the Muslims saying, "Thereafter you will summoned and you will confirm his word saying that most assuredly Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had conveyed the message and propagated the religion." It was then that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"Thus we have made you such a group that is moderate in nature so that you may be witness over the people and the messenger a witness over you.* [*Bukhari, v .2 p.645*]

From narrations in "Musnad Ahmad" and other books, it becomes evident that besides the people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام the nations of other prophets عليهم السلام will also allege that their prophets did not convey the message to them. Thereafter their prophets will also be asked whether they had fulfilled their mission. Upon replying in the affirmative, these Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام will be requested to bring forth a witness. They will summon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his ummah follower for this task.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his ummah followers will be asked to comment on this situation, they will say that they confirm the word of the prophets. Thereupon the ummah will further be questioned as to how they possessed knowledge concerning this matter. They will reply by saying, 'Our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed us that all the prophets propagated the message to their respective nations." (*"Durrul Manthūr" v.1 p.144*)

The general reference in the verse, *"so that you may be witness over the people"* alludes to the fact that the testimony will be against the people of all prophets. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that according to some traditions after the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have rendered their testimony, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself will be called forth and asked whether his Ummah are equitable and worthy of testing. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will verify their testimony and confirm their veracity. (v.2 *p.5*)

Without doubt this Ummah holds a lofty status which will be displayed on the day of Judgment before the entire humanity. This Ummah enjoys the privilege of belonging to the best of all prophets عليهم السلام and possessing the best of all divine scriptures. It is not only the book of Allāh but His sublime speech preserved even in the hearts of little children and is daily upon the tongues of young and old. Allāh has chosen this ummah from amongst all the children of Adam عليه السلام. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"And strive hard in Allāh's Cause as you ought to strive. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship; it is the religion of your father Ibrahīm* عليه السلام. It is He (Allāh), *Who has named you Muslims both before and in this (the Qur'ān), that the Messenger [Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] may be a witness over you and you be witnesses over mankind.* "[*verse 78*]

THE TESTIMONY OF THE UMMAH OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IN FAVOUR OF EACH OTHER SPELLS A DECISION OF FORGIVENESS

Among the many virtues of this Ummah, an especially outstanding one is the fact that their testimony against other nations is acceptable by Allāh. Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reported that some people passed by carrying a funeral bier. Everyone present had good words to say about the deceased. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented "Wājabat" (*"He deserves it"*). Thereafter another bier passed by, regarding which the people had nothing favourable to say. Again the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said 'Wājabat". Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه enquired concerning these comments upon which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Good words were spoken in favour of the first person; thus he became deserving of Heaven (*Jannah*). On the contrary, no one had anything favourable to say about the second, making him deserving of Hell." You people are the witnesses of Allāh upon the earth. (*Bukhari v.1 p.183*)

In the exegesis (*tafsīr*) Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1 p-145*) it is narrated on the authority of Musnad Ahmad" and "Sunan Ibn Majah" from Sayyidina Abu Zubair Thaqafi رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Soon you people will be able to distinguish the good from the bad and will know the condition of each person." The Companions (*Sahābah*) رضى الله عنهم enquired "How will this be possible?" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "By the good and evil mentioned (i.e. That Muslim who is said to be good is indeed good and the one who is said to be evil is indeed evil.) You people are the witnesses of Allāh on the earth.'

People who excessively curse others are excluded from the noble status of being witness. It is reported in Sunan Tirmidhi that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated, "The one who curses excessively can neither be a witness on the Day of Judgment nor an intercessor."

MODERATION OF THE UMMAH OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND THE EXPLANATION OF THE WORD "WASATA"

In praise of this Ummah the words "Ummataw Wasata" is used. The word "Wasata" means 'the best' as well as 'Udūl' which is the plural of "Adal" meaning 'just' and 'reliable', denoting a person whose evidence is acceptable and one who possesses noble qualities. He is a person who is an embodiment of all good qualities and who is averse to evil traits. The word is commonly translated as moderate'. Therefore this Ummah is one of moderate behaviour in all aspects, whether of character or action. They are people who do not sway to extremes; neither are they negligent in worship nor extremely ascetic like the monks who discard the world to live in mountains.

Performing Salāh the entire night through is not permitted since fulfilling the rights of one's body, spouse and guests is of fundamental importance. Similarly, fasting each and every day is also not permitted for the same reasons. Neither extravagance nor miserliness is desired, but the middle path is encouraged which is generally termed as generosity'. In a like manner, cowardliness as well as undue bravery, which may lead to harming others, is

discouraged. A person should neither be an oppressor nor should he allow himself to be oppressed by others. While women cannot be made leaders, they should also not be oppressed. By the same token, all actions are not declared to be lawful nor is every food made permissible. Rather, the lawful and unlawful have been clearly defined.

Harmful and impure substances cannot be consumed since they have adverse effects upon the body and soul. Pure and wholesome foods are allowed. The human being has been elevated in status and protected from stooping to bestiality and barbarism. Even on the battlefield in the face of the enemy certain laws and limitations have been prescribed which are the epitome of moderation. The killing of women and children as well as obligatory mutilation of bodies has been prohibited. Zakāh has been made compulsory while Propitiatory offering *(Sadaqa)* remains optional. The laws of inheritance and succession have been enforced so that wealth does not stagnate. The death penalty has been instituted where a murder is deliberately committed but waived when committed accidentally in which case the blood money will have to be paid. Even in the case where the death penalty becomes binding, the heirs of the murdered reserve the option to either enforce it or accept the blood money in exchange. If one browses through the numerous books of hadith and Islāmic jurisprudence (Fiqh), one will notice the clearly moderate stance of Islāmic laws.

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا ٱلْقِبْلَةَ ٱلَّتِى كُنتَ عَلَيْهَآ إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يَتَّبِعُ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِمَّن يَنقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِن كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَٰنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِٱلنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿143﴾

(143) (continued). And We prescribed the Qibla upon which you were, so that We may ascertain the ones who will follow the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from those who will turn back on their heels. Verily this changing of the Qibla is a grave matter (for all) except those whom Allāh has guided. And Allāh will not put your Belief (Imān) to waste. Verily Allāh is, unto mankind, Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE CHANGE OF QIBLA AS A TEST

After expressing the excellence of the Ummah followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the discussion once again reverts to the change of Qibla. The switch from Baitul Muqaddas towards Ka'ba after sixteen to seventeen months concealed the wisdom of being a test to ascertain who will follow the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and who will turn back on their heels, refusing to follow him. A believer intends only to worship Allāh and obey him. Wherever he is instructed to face during Salāh, that direction becomes his Qibla. An obedient servant of Allāh harbours no reservations neither does he object to Allāh's commandments.

Allāh explains the wisdom behind the change of Qibla as a test to know who are the true followers and who are the rejecters i.e. this fact will become evident before everyone, though it was always in the knowledge of Allāh. When

the order to change the Qibla was revealed, some people whose Belief *(Imān)* was weak denounced their faith, saying 'Sometimes we receive the order to turn here and sometimes to turn there!" (This was merely an excuse to turn apostate). [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.1, pg. 146,. quoting from Ibn Juraij* رحمة الله عليه]

Allāh reserves the right to instruct His servants as He pleases but the change of Qibla appeared to be a very grave matter to the ignorant, the hypocrites and the Jews. Having become very restricting to them, they made it a tool for degradation, ridicule and a platform for objection. For the believers, there is no question of objection or complaint. The faithful are pleased and contented and are steadfast in obeying Allāh's commands, desiring nothing but obedience to Allāh.

THE REWARD FOR THE SALĀH PERFORMED TOWARDS THE FIRST QIBLA IS NOT LOST

Commenting on the verse, *'And Allāh will not put your Belief (Imān) to waste"* the *tafsīr* "Durrul Manthūr" quotes on the authority of "Sunan Tirmidhi", "Tabrani" and "Mustadrak Hākim", a narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه who says,. "When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received the revelation to face the Ka'ba, the Sahabah رضی الله عنهم enquired about the condition of those people's Salāh who faced Baitul Muqaddas and who had already passed away. At this instance the above verse was revealed wherein it is explained that Allāh will not put their Belief *(Imān)* to waste.

In this verse Salāh is termed as "Belief *(Imān)*' which makes the high status of Salāh apparent. In certain traditions it is mentioned that the position of Salāh in Islām is as the position of the head in the body. (*'Targhīb" v.1 p.246*). The presence of the head lends credibility to the body. Without the head the body is useless. In the concluding portion of the verse it is mentioned, " *Verily Allāh is, unto mankind, Most Forgiving. Most Merciful."*

Allāh is The All Wise as well as The Sovereign. With wisdom He instructs man with certain injunctions wherein lies man's good fortune and benefit. Allāh's compassion and mercy abounds in every commandment. Whoever will perform his Salāh according to Allāh's command should never doubt its acceptance, since Allāh will never put to waste an action correctly performed. The words 'Ra'ūf' and "Rahīm' both denote compassion but this meaning is accentuated in the word Ra'ūf'.

قَدْ نَرَىٰ تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَىٰهَا ۚ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنتُمْ فَوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُۥ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿144﴾

(144) Verily We see you [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] frequently lifting your gaze towards the heavens. We will most assuredly turn you towards a Qibla pleasing to you. So turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque (Masjid) and

wherever you may be, turn your faces to its direction. Most certainly those who have been given the Book know well that this order is from their Lord. And Allāh is not unmindful of what you do.

THE ORDER TO TURN TOWARDS THE KA'BA AND THE EAGER ANTICIPATION OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that during the period when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was performing Salāh towards Baitul Muqaddas he would, upon completion, lift his eyes skywards in anticipation of the order which would fix the Ka'ba as the Qibla of the Muslims. It was due to this that the verse, "*Verily We see you frequently lifting your gaze towards the heavens*" was revealed.

Allāma Wāhidi رحمة الله عليه writes in Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.39*) that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم expressed his heartfelt desire to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام that Allāh should turn him away from the Qibla of the Jews and appoint another Qibla for him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preferred to face towards the Ka'ba which was the Qibla of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, I am but a servant like yourself having no option in the matter. You should request Allāh to turn your Qibla to that of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.' Thereafter Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام ascended towards the heavens while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم continued to look towards the sky in anticipation of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام arriving with the command to face towards the Ka'ba. it was with regard to this that the above mentioned verse was revealed.

After the Hijra (migration to Madinah) the Muslims continued to face towards Baitul Muqaddas in Ṣalāh for approximately sixteen to seventeen months. It was only after this duration of time that the Ka'ba was fixed as the Qibla of the Muslims as desired by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In this verse Allāh also issues a general command for all the Muslims to face towards the sacred mosque (*Masjidul Harām*) wherever in the world they may be situated.

A SLIGHT DEFLECTION OF THE TRUE DIRECTION OF THE QIBLA WILL NOT DISRUPT THE SALĀH

The "*sacred mosque*" refers to the one in the immediate vicinity surrounding the Ka'ba. The entire Ummah followers unanimously accepts the Ka'ba as being the Qibla of the Muslims. Due to the fact that the Ka'ba is situated within the Masjidul Harām the instruction was given to face towards this Mosque *(Masjid)*. Here the verse alludes to the fact that the exact direction of the Ka'ba does not have to be faced by every person who may be far or near. It will suffice for him to merely turn towards the direction of the Masjidul Harām when performing Salāh. Since it is not always possible for people not present within the Masjidul Harām to face towards the exact location of the Ka'ba, the command is to face towards the direction of the Masjidul Harām so as not to place undue difficulty upon the Muslims. However, the person who is physically present within the Masjidul Harām has to face directly towards the Ka'ba when performing Salāh.

The exegesis *(tafsīr)* "Qurtubi" (*v.2, p. 159*) reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Ka'ba is the Qibla for those within the Masjidul Harām while the Masjidul Harām is the Qibla for those

within the Haram, and the Haram is the Qibla for my entire Ummah followers wherever they may be in this world.' Jurists write that it will suffice for a person to face towards whichever direction the Ka'ba is situated. A slight deflection will not nullify the Salāh. When a person begins to perform Salāh, a deflection of upto 22.5 degrees right or left will be of no consequence. Jurists have deduced from the verse *"the direction of the sacred* mosque *(Masjid)"* that it is sufficient to face towards the direction of the Ka'ba even though one may not be totally accurate.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated in a narration of Tirmidhi that the Qibla lies between the east and the west. This was with reference to the people of Madinah because the Ka'ba lies south of Madinah Munawwarah. Allāh has allowed much flexibility to every person in the world in that he may face towards the direction of the Ka'ba in Salāh. Should one deflect slightly from the true direction, one's Salāh will still be valid. Allāh has permitted such versatility in His injunctions so that it becomes easy for every person to practice upon them.

Just as the times of salāh are determined by physical observation of the elements, the direction of Qibla may be determined without mathematical, geometrical or astronomical calculations. It does not require any scientific instruments and can be determined without any difficulties. There exists much pliancy in the matter of the Qibla. However, when a Mosque *(Masjid)* is being constructed, intensive verification is required when determining the direction of Qibla.

THE WISDOM IN SPECIFYING THE KA'BA AS QIBLA

The Being of Allāh is not confined to any place or direction. Everything belongs to Him as is evident from the verse,' *Say to Allāh belongs the east and the west".* Whether we perform Salāh collectively or individually, it is necessary for every person to face the same direction. To achieve this unity, the Ka'ba was designated as the Qibla. Since the Ka'ba was originally constructed by the father of all mankind and the first prophet, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and thereafter again by Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام (who was universally accepted) it is the natural choice as the Qibla till eternity. If the choice was left to mankind to designate the Qibla, many disputes would have arisen which would ultimately deprive us of any united stand.

Another wisdom behind the fixing of the Ka'ba specifically as the Qibla for Salāh is that it is possible to perform Salāh on all four sides of the Ka'ba, People in every direction are able to perform their Salāh by merely turning towards the direction of the Ka'ba in relation to their respective locations. Consequently, Salāh now takes place in the east, west, north and south. In this, we witness the realisation of such verses as, *"To Allāh belongs the East and the west"* and, *"Where so ever you may turn, there you shall find countenance of Allāh."*

The verse concludes with the statement, *"Most certainly those who have been given the Book know well that this order is from their Lord."* It was only due to obstinacy that they objected, since they had perfect knowledge that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was indeed the messenger concerning which their scriptures had prophesied. They also understood well that he would not issue any false or futile instructions. *["Ruhul Ma'āni"]*

".....and Allāh is not unmindful of what you do." Allāh is well aware of every action and movement of a person. Those who object will receive the due punishment for their disbelief and evil actions.

وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَّا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ ۚ وَمَا أَنتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا بَعْضُهُم بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۙ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَّمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (145)

(145) Even if you have to present every kind of proof to those who have been given the scriptures, they will not turn towards your Qibla; neither should you turn towards theirs. They will not even turn towards the Qiblas of each other. Should you now follow their wishes after knowledge has come to you, then surely you would be among the oppressive folk.

FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING THE OBSTINACY OF THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

This verse further clarifies the stubbornness of these people and makes it evident that they had no desire whatsoever to accept the truth. Their refusal to accept the change of Qibla was not based on any proof or valid argument but they were merely bent upon disputing and displaying their arrogance. They were unwilling to accept any reasonable proofs and would not compromise to follow the Qibla of Muslims. Therefore, why should the Muslims follow their whims?

The Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)* attempted to beguile the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, 'O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم return to our Qibla and we will believe in your apostleship and follow you." Allāh negates both aspects here by declaring that they 'will neither follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, nor will he turn towards their Qibla. The Qibla of the Jews was Baitul Muqaddas while the Christians adopted an easternly direction, although Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام never faced in that direction before his ascension to the heavens. Their Qibla was the same as that of the Jews viz. Baitul Muqaddas. *["Ruhul Ma'āni", v.2,. p.11]*

".....they will not even turn towards the Qiblas of each other" The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.12*) writes that this verse describes the stubbornness of the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)* and the servitude they paid to their carnal passions. Allāh wishes to inform His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the attitude of these people is not reserved to their interaction with him specifically, but exists even in their mutual relationships between themselves.

"Should you now follow their wishes after knowledge has come to You, then surely you would be among the oppressive folk." This verse explains that divine knowledge had come to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which is most definitely from Allāh alone. At the same time the human is imbued with desires which will not permit him to accept the truth. Therefore should a person choose to follow his desires, he will be counted amongst those who are oppressive and reject the truth to fall

behind falsehood. In this is grave emphasis against the satiation of one's desires. Reference is also made to the fact that no sin can stem from the prophets عليه السلام since the following of one's desires and commission of sins are attributes of oppressive people, while the prophets عليه السلام have been safeguarded by Allāh from committing any oppression. [*Rūhul Ma'āni", v.1, p.12*]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَعْرِفُونَهُۥ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

(146) Those who have been given the scriptures recognise the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم just as they recognise their very own Sons. Without doubt there exists amongst them a group who knowingly conceal the truth. (147) The truth is from your Lord; so never be amongst those who are doubtful.

THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK RECOGNISED THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم BUT CONCEALED THE TRUTH

This verse further discloses the obstinacy and rebelliousness of the *"Ahlul Kitāb" (People of the Book)*. Not only did they display these characteristics with regard to the change of Qibla, but, based purely upon their stubborn attitude, they even rejected the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They read in the divine books concerning the noble traits of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his imminent advent. In this way they very starkly recognized the features of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They realized that he was indeed a prophet of Allāh just as they knew who their children were. They had no doubts regarding the issue. [*Durrul Manthūr, v.1, p. 147*]

A former Jewish scholar, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه recognised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be the messenger of Allāh the very first time he set eyes on the noble countenance. Upon accepting Islām, he mentioned that he was more convinced about the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم than he was about his own children. When Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه questioned his reason for this, he replied, "With conviction I can testify that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is the messenger of Allāh whereas I cannot do the same with regard to my children. One cannot say what women do (in the absence of their husbands). It is just possible that my wife had been unfaithful and those I call my children are, in reality, someone else's." [*Asbābun Nuzūl" by Wāhidy p.40 and 'Durrul Manthūr", v.1, p.147*]

Mention is then made of the group who conceal the truth even though they know it is the truth. They also know very well that they are hiding it from others and realise its serious consequences and resultant punishment from Allāh.

"The truth is from your Lord so never be amongst those who are doubtful." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.14*) writes that this verse serves to explain that the truth is absolutely clear and established. None can doubt it at all. Even though the verse is phrased as a command, it is actually a statement to the effect that none can doubt the truth from Allāh.

وَلِكُلٍّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿148﴾

(148) And every group has a direction towards which they turn. So hasten towards good actions. Wherever you may be, Allāh shall collect you all together. Surely Allāh is capable of everything.

THE QIBLA OF EVERY GROUP IS DIFFERENT

The verse explains that every denomination, group and religion always had and will always have their own directions to face in their respective forms of worship. This is irrespective of whether their directions were affixed by themselves or they were ordained by Allāh. The fact that the Qibla of the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was different from that of anyone else should, therefore, not be a cause of surprise and objection.

Another interpretation of the verse is that even from amongst the Muslims, the people of every town and country will face a different direction depending on their geographical position since the Qibla is a fixed cardinal point. Consequently, people will be facing the Qibla from every direction; some from an easterly direction, some westerly, some southerly, some northerly, etc. [*Rūhul Ma'āni', v.2, p.14*]

"So hasten to good actions" i.e. to all such deeds wherein lies the good fortune of both worlds. The order to face the Ka'ba should be eagerly implemented just as the rest of all Allāh's commands. Certain commentators have interpreted *'good actions"* to mean Salāh. Therefore when the prescribed time for Salāh begins, a person should swiftly commence preparing.

"Wherever you may be Allāh shall collect you all together Surely Allāh is capable of everything." Wherever in the world people may be, Allāh will gather them together for retribution. Rewards will be accorded for good deeds and the wrong doers will be punished. Therefore a person should exploit every opportunity and should not be unmindful of the Day of Judgment. Allāh is capable of everything giving life, death, raising the dead and giving retribution.

"And every group has a direction towards which they face. So hasten towards good actions." This verse makes reference to the fact that a Muslim should not involve himself in futile debates. Since it has been brought to light that the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* will not face towards the Ka'ba, neither will the Muslims turn towards the Qibla of the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)*, further deliberation upon the matter is futile and a waste of time. All such discussions should be avoided and one should involve oneself in good actions which may earn reward in the Hereafter. It is also learnt from this verse that when the opportunity presents itself to do good actions, a person should not delay in its performance.

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لَلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿149﴾ وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ

وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلِأُتِمَّ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ (150)

(149) And wherever you may go, turn your face to the direction of the holy mosque. And most assuredly this is the truth from your Lord. Allāh is not unmindful of what you do. (150) And wherever you may go turn your face to the direction of the holy mosque. Wherever you may be stationed turn your faces towards it so that people may not entertain an argument against you; except those who oppress. So do not fear them but fear Me, that I may fulfil My favour upon you and you be rightly guided.

FACING TOWARDS THE MASJIDUL HARĀM WHEREVER A PERSON MAY BE

The verse opens by explaining that wherever a person travels, he should turn towards the Masjidul Harām in Salāh. This instruction is from Allāh who is cognisant of every action. Thereafter Allāh repeats the instruction addressing the Muslims in general to face towards the Masjidul Harām in Salāh wherever they may be. From the verse, *Verily We see you frequently lifting your gaze towards the heaven'* upto the current verse under discussion, the instruction to *"turn your face towards the direction of the sacred mosque (Masjid)"* is repeated thrice. The command of *"wherever you may be turn your faces towards it"* recurs twice. This repetition is due to the fact that the change of Qibla was a highly controversial issue causing much commotion, due to which some weak Muslims even turned apostate. Therefore, the command to face the Masjidul Harām had to be emphasised. This emphasis is also highlighted by the frequent mention of statements like *"Verily this is the truth from your Lord"*.

Some commentators have stated that the repetition refers to the facing towards the Masjidul Harūm while at home or during a journey. The verse *"Wherever you may go"* is repeated so that it may be clear that one should face towards the Masjidul Harām irrespective of the journey being near or distant; eastwards, westwards, northwards or southwards. In all situations a person should only face towards the Masjidul Harām when performing Salāh.

WITH THE CHANGE OF QIBLA THE ARGUMENT OF THE JEWS WAS EXPELLED

"so that people may not entertain an argument against you' The commentator Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes that this verse provides the reason for the verse, *'so turn your faces towards it'* This means that after the change of Qibla, the Jews could no longer entertain the argument that their scriptures mention that the final prophet will face towards the Ka'ba; why does the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم face Baitul Muqaddas? Another argument of theirs was that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not conform to their religion yet he faced their Qibla. Both these arguments were put to an end when the Ka'ba was made the Qibla of the Muslims. in a like manner, the complaint of the idolaters was also appeased. They often questioned that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم claimed to follow Ibrahīm عليه السلام, why was he not facing the Qibla of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Therefore the word *"people"* in the above verse refers to both, the Jews and the idolaters.

"except those who oppress" With the establishment of the Ka'ba as Qibla, the objections raised were all answered. Only those who were obstinate and oppressive were not satisfied since they were not prepared to accept the truth. An example were those stubborn Jews who said that the Ka'ba was merely chosen because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was inclined towards the beliefs of his people (the Arabs), and due to his love for his birth place. Some said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) has reverted to the Qibla of his forefathers but will soon turn back to Baitul Muqaddas. The tongues of such obstinate people can never be harnessed because they keep creating counter objections.

"so do not fear them but fear Me" i.e. The order to face the Ka'ba should be enacted and no attention should be given to the obstinate ones who merely raise futile objections. They should not be feared since their mockery cannot harm one in any way. Only Allāh should be feared, whose commands should not be contradicted.

"That I may fulfill My favour upon you and you be rightly guided" i.e. I have instructed you so that I may complete My bounties upon you and that I may keep you steadfast upon the true guidance. [*Baydawi*]

كَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا۟ تَعْلَمُونَ (151) فَٱذْكُرُونِىٓ أَذْكُرْكُمْ
وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لِى وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ (152)

(151) As We have sent to you a messenger from among yourselves who will recite to you Our verses; purify you; teach you the Book and wisdom; and teach you what you knew not. (152) So remember Me and I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and be not ungrateful.

COMPLETION OF THE FAVOUR FOR THE PEOPLE OF BELIEF *(IMĀN)*

The first of the above verses is linked to the ones mentioned previously. It means that just as Allāh, by virtue of specifying the Qibla, will bestow His favours upon the Muslims in the Hereafter; so too has He bestowed a favour in this world by sending His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to mankind.

The task of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم included reciting Allāh's verses and spiritual purification of the masses. By practising his teachings, one may attain purity from physical and spiritual maladies. He teaches the Qur'ān, wisdom and things which people knew not, which cannot be learnt except through divine revelation. Allāh sent His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and inspired him with revelation by virtue of which man benefits tremendously. Therefore Allāh declares, *"Remember Me and I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and do not show ingratitude."*

EXPLANATION OF THE VERSE *"REMEMBER ME AND I WILL REMEMBER YOU"*

The commentator Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه explains the verse thus: *"Remember Me by obedience to Me and I will remember you by awarding the appropriate reward."* Remembrance of Allāh may be accomplished by way of the heart, tongue and also by the practical obedience of His commandments. Abstaining from sin because of the fear of Allāh is also classified as His remembrance. Islāmic research scholars say that every person who is obedient to Allāh in fact remembers Him.

There is also great reward in remembering Allāh with the tongue. It is reported in a hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم quotes Allāh as saying, "I am with My servant when He remembers Me and engages His tongue in the recitation of My name." [Bukhari, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه].

Another hadith reports the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) to have said, "Allāh says that I am with My servant when he remembers Me. When he remembers me in privacy then I remember him likewise. When he remembers Me in a gathering then I remember him in a nobler gathering i.e. a gathering of angels." [*Bukhari, from Sayyidina Abu Hurairah* رضى الله عنه]

THE VIRTUES OF (*DHIKR*) REMEMBRANCE OF ALLĀH

There are great virtues reported in the traditions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم concerning the recitation of Tasbīh the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Takbīr *(Allāhu Akbar)*. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "For me to recite *'SubhānAllāh wal hamdu lillah walā ilāha illalāhu wAllāhu Akbar'* is more beloved than everything upon which the sun shines.' [*Muslim, v.2,*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked as to which form of remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* was best. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "It is the words which Allāh had chosen His angels to say, viz. *'SubhānAllāhi Hi Wa Bi Hamdihi'* [*Muslim v.2 p.351*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said "A date palm is planted in Heaven *(Jannah)* for the person who recites *'Subhān Allāh Hil Azīm Wa Bi Hamdihi'*." [*Tirmidhi, Chapter of Du'aa*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه transmitted the hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Two phrases are light on the tongue, heavy on the scales (on the Day of Judgment) and loved by Allāh. They are *'SubhānAllāhi Wa Bi Hamdihi SuhānAllāh Hil Azīm'*. [*Last hadith of Bukhari*]

A companion asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to prescribe for him an action which he could practise continuously since the injunctions of Islām are numerous. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Keep your tongue moist with the remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)*". [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه described that once he was walking behind the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while reciting *"Lā Howla Wa Lā Quwwata Illā Billah"* ("There is no power or might except with Allāh") to himself. The Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم turned and said, "O Abdullāh bin Qais (which was his real name)! Should I inform you of a treasure from the treasures of Allāh?" Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه replied in the affirmative, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "It is '*Lā Howla Wa Lā Quwwata Illā Billah*". [*Muslim, v.2, p.346*]

Sayyidina Abu Saīd Khudri رضى الله عنه says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "The people who remain engaged in the remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* are encircled by the angels; Allāh's mercy and tranquility descends upon them; and Allāh makes mention of them in His court". [*Muslim, v.2, p.345*]

THE VIRTUE AND IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING GRATITUDE

After making mention of remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)*, the discussion now revolves around the showing of gratitude. Allāh says, *"Be grateful to Me and be not ungrateful"* Showing gratitude together with remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* is of great importance. It is compulsory for every person to be thankful to Allāh for His numerous bounties which are impossible to enumerate. In showing gratitude, one admits the favours Allāh has bestowed upon him. These favours are expressed and appreciated both by word and by action. The person verbally praises Allāh for these bounties and simultaneously invests these favours in His worship and obedience. Rejecting these bounties, and utilising them in the committing of sins is actually a display of ingratitude. It is indeed foolish to use the very same bounties given by Allāh for His disobedience and in the subservience of one's carnal desires and servitude to Satan *(Shaytān)*. Every person exploits the boons of Allāh but very few show gratitude.

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"And few of my servants are grateful"* [*verse 13*]. Giving thanks is an action due to which bounties are perpetuated and increased. Ingratitude results in the deprivation of a favour. Allāh informs us in Surah Ibrahīm, *"When your Lord announced, If you show gratitude, then I will definitely give you more, and you are ungrateful, then indeed My punishment is severe."* [*verse* 7]

Ingratitude is predominant in the psyche of man. It appears in Surah Zukhruf, *"Man is clearly ungrateful."* [*verse 15*] Surah Ibrahīm contains the following, *"And He grants you whatever you ask Him for If you try to count Allāh's bounties, you will never be able to do so.* Indeed, man is extremely unjust and very ungrateful." [*verse 34*]

It should be the duty of Allāh's servants that we keep showing thanks to Him and keep His favours in mind. When employing the bounty of Allāh a person should praise Him. The supplications reported in the books of hadith constantly repeat the praises of Allāh. It is reported in a hadith that the phrase *'Alhamdu lillah'* is the crown of gratitude and that the person who does not praise Allāh has not shown gratitude to Him. [*Bayhaqi in Shubal Imān recorded in "Mishkāt', p. 102*]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّـٰبِرِينَ ﴿153﴾

(153) O you who believe! Seek help by means of patience and Salāh. Verily Allāh is with the patient ones.

THE COMMAND TO SEEK HELP THROUGH PATIENCE AND SALĀH

The literal meaning of the word patience (sabr) is 'to stop' or 'to prevent'. In the Islamic Laws (*Shari'ah*) it is used with the following three connotations:

- *To apply one self to the obedience and worship of Allāh.*
- *To prevent oneself from committing sins*
- *To persevere and be patient with the difficulties brought on by various calamities in such a way that one is content with the decision of Allāh without objection. At the same time, one should aspire for Allāh's reward in these trying times.*

People generally interpret patient *(sabr)* only in the third category. They do not even consider the first two, whereas all three categories are parts of its meaning. The common factor in all three categories involves the suppression of one's carnal desires and abstention from all deeds which constitute disobedience to Allāh. The person who adopts all three forms of sabr will become the beloved of Allāh and Allāh's mercy and help will be in his attendance. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"The patient ones will receive their full reward without reservation."* [*verse 10*]

THE VIRTUES AND IMPORTANCE OF SABR

The importance of patience and gratitude cannot be over emphasised in the short life of a Believer *(Mu'min)* which seems to last only as long as a fleeting star. Whether in ease, comfort or in difficulty, these traits are always beneficial. Sayyidina Suhaib رضى الله عنه narrates the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, the condition of a Believer *(Mu'min)* is astonishing. Every condition is a source of good to him and this cannot be attained by any other besides the Believer *(Mu'min)*. When he experiences favourable conditions, he is grateful and this is good for him. On the other hand, when he experiences adverse conditions, he is patient, and this too is excellent for him." [*Muslim,. v.2, p.413.*]

A hadith is reported in Bukhari [*v.2 p.958*] wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that none has ever received a gift better and vaster than patience *(sabr)*. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'The person who has been blessed with four qualities has gained the good of this world and the Hereafter. (These qualities are:)

1. *A thankful heart*
2. *A tongue constantly engaged in remembrance of Allāh (dhikr)*
3. *A body which can bear difficulties.*
4. *A wife who is not unfaithful to her husband, neither with regard to her chastity nor his wealth."*

[*Bayhaqi in 'Shu'bal Imān" as recorded in' Mishkāt' p. 283*]

In life, some difficulty will have to be experienced, but being patient will open the doors to numerous bounties. One will then receive such favours which

one cannot imagine. Difficulties befall every person whether he be a believer or a disbelievers *(kāfir)*; pious or impious. The difference is that those who are patient accrue rewards and are assured Allāh's help and mercy. On the contrary, those who do not exercise patience grumble, raise objections and are not satisfied with the decree of Allāh. Their difficulty is thus prolonged and they are deprived of reward. Those who object to Allāh's decision become disbelievers. In reality, those who are truly adversely affected by a calamity are those who are deprived of the reward of exercising patience. [*Bayhaqi in Dalāilun Nubuwwah*]

The person who perseveres in the face of adversities reaches elevated positions in the Hereafter. His difficulty is, in reality, no difficulty at all since he has received the recompense in full. In this world it will be witnessed that people toil in their duties the entire month, undergoing much difficulty. Laborers work hard in the heat of the sun but, because they are due to receive their full remuneration, they endure the difficulty happily. They do not consider their work as a burden.

SALĀH AS A MEANS OF AVERTING CALAMITIES

Together with patience, Salāh is also mentioned as a means by which assistance can be sought. Salāh is great tool by which the help of Allāh may be secured and relief gained from every type of difficulty. Sayyidina Hudhaifa رضی الله عنه narrates that whenever any adversity afflicted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم he would engage in Salāh. [*Mishkātul Masābīh, p. 117*]

The obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh is always of utmost importance, but for relief from any adversity the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would especially perform (Nafl) mandatory Salāh. Salātul Hājah (for requesting help), Salātul Istkhārah (for requesting counsel on a specific issue) and Salātul Istisqa (for requesting rain) have all been reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. All have been prescribed for securing Allāh's mercy and assistance. Some traditions concerning this subject have already been mentioned in the discussion of the verse, *"and seek assistance through patience and Salāh'* (*Surah Baqarah 45*).

It is the general practice of man that whenever any misfortune befalls, he begins formulating thousands of plans. He tries to secure the help of all creation, totally forgetting patience *(sabr)* and Salāh. Instead of procuring the needed assistance, he loses patience instead. Only a few would perform Salāh. Many would not even perform their obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh, let alone supererogation *(Nafl)*. They also continue to engage in the sins they always commit, so how can the mercy and help of Allāh be expected?

"Verily Allāh is with the patient ones" It is truly a great fortune for the patient people that they acquire the companionship of Allāh. When a person of even a little official status offers us his support, we take great courage and solace from this. However, when Allāh promises His support for the patient ones, no one seems convinced and people continue to express intolerance when afflicted by a calamity. In reality, a Believer *(Mu'min)* should never be despondent or worried because he is assured of success by being constant in Salāh and remaining patient.

(154) And do not say regarding those who have been martyred in Allāh 's cause, that they are dead. Nay, they are alive but you perceive it not.

THE VIRTUE OF MARTYRS

It is recorded in Asbābun Nuzūl' (*p.40*) that this verse was primarily revealed with regard to those Muslims who were martyred in the battle of Badr. These were eight from the Ansār and six from the Migrates *(Muhājirīn)*. It was revealed when some people said concerning some of these martyrs, that they were dead and deprived of the pleasures and boons of this world.

When people emerge from their homes in the defence of Allāh's religion and intending its propagation, wars will take place. In these wars, it is obvious that not only disbelievers will be killed but many Muslims will also lose their lives. These Muslims have been accorded the honourable title of Martyrs *(Shuhadā)*. Their rank is very high and they are promised lofty stages in the grave, superior to others. For this reason, the verse tells us not to refer to them as dead since their lives in the grave are far better than that of the other deceased. People cannot, however, perceive this existence of the Martyrs *(Shuhadā)*. Allāh says in verses 169 and 170 of Surah Āl Imrān, *"Never consider those slain in Allāh 's way to be dead. Indeed they are alive, being sustained by their Lord. They are jubilant with what their Lord gives them from His bounty"*

In the realm of the grave *(Barzakh)* the existence of the prophets عليهم السلام is most pronounced. The earth does not decompose their bodies at all. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in a Hadith, "Allāh has prohibited the earth from consuming the bodies of the prophets عليهم السلام." [*Abu Dawūd, v.1, p.150*] Their lives in the grave are so distinguished from others that it is evident even in some of their worldly affairs e g. their inheritance is not distributed and their wives may not be married after them. After the prophets عليهم السلام, the status of the Martyrs *(Shuhadā)* is most superior as was elucidated in the verse under discussion as well as the one in Surah Āl Imrān cited above. After these two categories, come the rest of people who will either receive punishment or peace in their graves. The details of this are recorded in the books of Hadith.

The martyr *(Shahīd)* receives this great rank because he had sacrificed his life and wealth in the path of Allāh. The honour which he will witness in the life of Barzakh will cause all the pleasures of the world to seem totally worthless. Sayyidina Masruq رحمة الله عليه says that they queried from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه concerning the verse, *"Never consider those slain in Allāh's way to be dead. Indeed they are alive, being sustained by their Lord. They are jubilant with what their Lord gives them from His bounty'* [*Surah Āl Imrān, verses 169 and 170*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه said, "We enquired the very same from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to which he replied, The souls of the Martyrs *(Shuhadā)* are within the bellies of green birds who perch upon lanterns suspended from Allāh's throne. These birds travel throughout Heaven *(Jannah)* wherever they please, then return to these lanterns. Allāh asks these souls what they desire, to which they say, 'What more can we ask for? We traverse wherever

we wish in Heaven *(Jannah)*, eat and drink as we please.' Allāh repeats the question thrice when they realise that some reply must be given. They answer, 'We wish that our souls be returned to our bodies so that we again get ourselves slain in Your path.' (Since return to the world is not allowed) they will be left as they are for they are content." [*Muslim, v.2, p.135*]

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person who passes away and receives good fortune (i.e. Safety from punishment and Allāh's blessings) will never want to return to this world even though he receive everything the world has to offer. The only exception is the martyr *(Shahīd)* who will love to return so that he may again be killed in the way of Allāh because of the great virtue of martyrdom which he will have experienced." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.392*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه relates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "I swear by the Being in whose hands is my life that I wish to be slain in the path of Allāh, then given life again, then slain again, then given life, then slain and given life to be slain yet again." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.392*] In spite of holding the great mantle of prophethood, which excels all other positions, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم expressed the wish to be martyred over and over again. Divine wisdom obviously presides in the fact that the wish of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم was not literally fulfilled. However, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did pass away a martyr *(Shahīd)* since his death was caused by the poisoned goatmeat he had eaten in the battle of Khaiber. A Jewish lady gave this to him and although its effect was not immediate, it did surface towards the end of his life.

EVERY SIN OF A MARTYR IS FORGIVEN EXCEPT WHAT IS DUE TO OTHER PEOPLE

Even though the excellence of the martyr *(Shahīd)* is so great, as mentioned above, the dues that he owes to others will not be waived. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم mentioned, "A martyr *(Shahīd)* is forgiven for everything except his debts." [*Muslim, v.2, p.135*]

THE REQUIREMENT OF SINCERITY IN JIHĀD *(RELIGIOUS WAR)*

To acquire the rank of a martyr *(Shahīd)*, it is imperative that a person engages in battle against the enemies of Islām solely for the pleasure of Allāh. He should have been killed while fighting only for the elevation of Allāh's Dīn *(religion)*. Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضی الله عنه narrates that once a person asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم regarding a person who fights in a battle to gain the booty, or one who does so for fame, or to accrue accolades for his valour. He wished to know whom from amongst these can be said to be in Allāh's path. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "The one who strives for the Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh to reign supreme, is in the path of Allāh." [*Bukhari, v.1 p.394 and Muslim, v.2, p.139*]

According to another narration, someone enquired from the Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم about a person who fights to display his valour, another who fights for the honour of his tribe or nation, while yet another fights to show off He wished to know which of these persons are in the path of Allāh? The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "The one who strives for the Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh to reign

supreme, is in the path of Allāh." [*Muslim, v.2, p.140*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Whoever is injured in the path of Allāh (and Allāh alone knows who is truly injured in His path) will appear in such a condition before Allāh on the Day of Judgment that his wound will still be bleeding. Although the colour will be of blood, but the fragrance will be of musk." [*Muslim, v. 2, p.133*] The phrase "and Allāh alone knows who is truly injured in His path" alludes to this very same aspect of sincerity which is so imperative for every act of worship. Man can only see the superficial aspect of any action. Its acceptance depends upon the intention. If it was carried out solely to please Allāh, it will be accepted, the due reward attained and the promised benefits gained. On the contrary, if any action is performed with the intention of showing off then not only will the reward be lost, but it will be a source of harm in the Hereafter, which will ultimately cause one to enter Hell.

A PERSON KILLED IN A TRIBAL FEUD OR NATIONAL WAR IS NOT TERMED A MARTYR *(SHAHĪD)*

Today numerous wars and disputes rage around the world and people are continually being killed. The wars are usually fought for national, territorial or linguistic reasons. The pleasure of Allāh is not even considered. Even though a person dying in these battles may be termed a martyr *(Shahīd)* by the people, the true martyr *(Shahīd)* is the one whom Allāh deems as such. Nowadays, it is common place to use the terms 'national martyr *(Shahīd)*' etc. and these may even be publicised, but using these terms for non-believers and apostates is absolute ignorance. May Allāh protect us from going astray.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ
الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿155﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿156﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿157﴾

(155) Most assuredly We will test you with a bit of fear, hunger, and a deficiency in wealth, life and provisions. So give glad tidings to the patient ones. (156) (They are) those who, when any adversity befall them, say, 'Verily to Allāh do we belong, and to Him is our return.' (157) These are the ones upon whom the collective and special mercies of Allāh descend and who are rightly guided.

VARIOUS WAYS OF TRIALS AND TESTS

This world is a place of trials. The creation of life and death is, in itself, aimed at testing the human, as Allāh says in Surah Mulk, *'Sanctified is that Being in whose control is sovereignty and Who is capable of all things; He who created death and life to test who amongst you carries out the best actions.* [*verses 1 and 2*]

Allāh states in Surah Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Most definitely We will examine you until it is ascertained who are the ones who truly strive in Allāh's path from amongst you; and who are the ones who endure; and that We may have knowledge of you.' [*verse 31*]

In the verse under discussion, numerous methods of emphasis are employed in the form of the letters "Lām" and "Nūn Thaqila." These imply that the tests are inevitable. Sometimes they will occur in the form of fear, at times one will encounter hunger, while it may also happen that one's wealth will decrease. Lives of friends, relatives, children or grandchildren may be lost, while sometimes produce and provisions may decrease. In this verse, all the main categories of calamities have been enumerated. Fear of enemies, droughts, floods, earthquakes, loss in trade, collapse of buildings, theft, misplacement of wealth, its destruction, closing down of factories, shut down of machinery, power failures, death of near and dear ones, spread of pestilence, deficiency in harvests, their destruction, their infestation by insects, plagues of locusts, etc. Inference is made to all of these.

The Believer *(Mu'min)* perseveres through all of these. In the face of any adversity, he realises that it is a test from Allāh and remains content with the decision of Allāh, aspiring for the rewards promised for it. Tribulations also occur as an admonition for any sins committed, or as an atonement for any evil deeds. It may also be a test or a means of elevating a person's rank. All these facts are clearly expounded in the Qur'ān and Ahādīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

THE BENEFIT OF CALAMITIES TO THE BELIEVER *(MU'MIN)*

A verse of Sarah Nisā states, *"Whosoever perpetrates an evil act shall meet its retribution.'* [*verse 123*] The books of hadith and exegesis *(tafsīr)* report that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه once asked, "Oh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, is there any way to salvation after the revelation of this verse (*i.e. verse 123 of Surah Nisā*) since every evil deed will be accorded its punishment?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Oh Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه! May Allāh be merciful to you. Do you never fall ill? Does not any difficulty nor any grief afflict you? Does no calamity befall you?' He responded, "Definitely these things do occur." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said, *"By means of all this, your sins are removed."*

In another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have told him, "Oh Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, you and your companions will receive atonement for your sins in this very world so that you may meet Allāh in a condition that no sin remains to your account. As for the Kāfir *(non-believer)*, all his sins will be accumulated so that he receives their full chastisement in the Hereafter." [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.557-558*]

Verse 30 of Surah Shura reads, *"The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and Allāh pardons a great deal.'* Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The little or great difficulty which a person encounters is due to his sins, but what Allāh overlooks is much more. Thereafter the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse, *"The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and Allāh pardons a great deal."* [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh afflicts that person with difficulty for whom He intends good." [Bukhari, v.2, p.843] Another Hadith reads, "Whenever Allāh fixes a high rank

for His servant which he cannot attain by his actions, Allāh afflicts him with a difficulty. Allāh then affords him the endurance, implementing which, he becomes worthy of that particular rank." [*Ahmad and Abu Dawūd as recorded in Mishkātul Masābīh, p. 137*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said "Whatever difficulty afflicts a Believer *(Mu'min)* will be an atonement for his sins, whether it be a sickness, worry, grief, or even a thorn prick." [*Bukhari, v.2 p.843*]

Sayyidah Ummus Sā'ib رضى الله عنها was a lady Sahābiya. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم found her ill one day and asked her what was the cause of her condition. She replied that it was fever and cursed it. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not curse the fever because it eradicates the sins of people just as a furnace eradicates dirt from metal." [*Muslimm, v.2, p. 319*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, " When Allāh intends good for any servant, He speeds up the punishment in this world. On the contrary, when Allāh intends harm for a person, He withholds the punishment which will fully be given to the person on the Day of Judgment." [*Tirmidhi in the Chapter of Abstinence*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Believer *(Mu'min)* male and female constantly experience difficulties in their lives, wealth and children until they meet Allāh in such a condition that no sin remains in their account." [*"Tirmidhi" in the Chapter of Abstinence"*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه transmits the hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Muslim who loses three small children will be made to enter Heaven *(Jannah)* on account of the mercy which Allāh bestows upon these children." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.167*] ,

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه says that once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed a group of women. Amongst other advices given he said, "The person who loses three small children will have them become a barrier for him/her on the Day of Judgment." A woman asked concerning the person whose two children had passed away. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم responded by saying, "When one loses two children then this will also give the same benefit." [*Bukhari v.1 p.167*]

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The couple who loses three children will be made to enter Heaven *(Jannah)* by the grace of Allāh." The companions queried regarding the loss of two children, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The same applies for them too." Someone then asked regarding one child, to which the reply was given that the same would apply to them as well. Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added, "I swear by the Being in whose control lies My life that even the unformed foetus will pull its mother into Heaven *(Jannah)*, if the mother had aspired for her reward at the time of its death." [*Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 153*]

No difficulty or calamity should be a cause of fear and grief to a Believer *(Mu'min)*. It is a source of good for him since a little difficulty in this temporary

world will be a source of evading chastisement in the Hereafter and reaping its bounties. This can only be to a person's benefit and is a cheap bargain. One is required to be patient, aspire for the rewards and to be content with the decision of Allāh. This does not mean that a person should not ask Allāh to remove the difficulty since such a supplication was a practice of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. One should always ask Allāh for safety from all troubles and never ask Allāh to afflict one with calamities and diseases. If it does come, one should be tolerant.

A UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PATIENT ONES

After discussing the inevitability of trials, Allāh declares. *'And give glad tidings to the patient ones."* Thereafter the attributes of the *'patient ones"* are discussed in the following verses, *"Those who, when any adversity afflicts them, they say, Verily to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.* This phrase includes many dimensions and is a great source of consolation. At the outset, the reciter admits that he belongs to Allāh. Since a person is the slave of Allāh, and is His creation, he has to be totally content with Allāh's decision. We belong to Allāh and whatever life and wealth Allāh chooses to take from us, these also belong to Him. Whatever Allāh chooses to do with His creation is His right and no one has the authority to object nor vent his displeasure, neither by heart nor by tongue.

Once, when the grandson of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was about to leave the world, the daughter of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم called for her father. He sent Salām to her with the following message, "Verily to Allāh belongs that which He takes and that which He gives. Everything has a prescribed lifespan. So be patient and hope for Allāh's reward." [*Bukhari, v.2, p. 171*]

The second part of the Qur'anic verse is an announcement and admission that we are soon to return to Allāh when we will receive the reward for all lost things. This reward is far superior to the limited things of this world which people grieve to lose. The separation from deceased kith and kin is only a temporary one. Where they have gone we are surely to go too. There, in a place of bliss and happiness, we will (Insha Allāh) meet once again.

In "Tirmidhi" (*v.1 p.166*) it is narrated that when a child of a person passes away, Allāh asks His angels, "Have you taken away the apple of his eye?" When they reply in the affirmative Allāh asks further, "What did My servant have to say?' They reply, "He praised You and said, 'Verily to Allāh we belong and unto Him is our return *(i.e. Innā Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn)*." Upon hearing this, Allāh instructs the angels, 'Build for My servant a mansion in Heaven *(Jannah)* and call it the Baitul Hamd *(Home of Praise)*."

Another hadith reads thus, "Whenever a Muslim man or woman recalls a difficulty which may have occurred some time before, then 'recites,' Verily to Allāh we belong and to Him we shall return," Allāh grants him the same reward which he acquired the day the difficulty had afflicted him. [*Ahmad and Bayhaqi as recorded in "Mishkātul Masābīh", v.1, p.53*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said "Whenever the strap of a person's shoe breaks, then too he should recite, *'Innā Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn'* because this is also a form of difficulty.

[*Mishkātul Masābīh" from Bayhaqi*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه relates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who says, *'Innā Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn'* when in adverse conditions, Allāh will grant him recompense and a good life in the Hereafter. Allāh will also grant him something better in exchange for what he lost." [*Durrul Manthūr*]

"THE COLLECTIVE AND SPECIAL MERCIES OF ALLĀH"

After explaining the qualities of the patient ones, Allāh makes mention of the glad tidings these people are worthy of. He says, *"These are the ones upon whom the collective and special mercies of Allāh descends, and these are the rightly guided.* The word 'Salawāt' is the plural of 'Salāh' which means 'mercy'. The common word for mercy is 'rahmah' which is also mentioned in this verse. Some commentators maintain that the word 'rahmah' is added for emphasis. [*Qurtubi, v.2, p.177*]

The commentator Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه explains that when the word 'Salāh' is used with reference to Allāh, it denotes purification and forgiveness. When its plural is used, it refers to a multitude of the same. Mercy generally refers to compassion and favours. [*v.1 p.117*] Some commentators say that the word 'Salāh' refers to general mercies and 'rahmah' refers to special mercies.

"And these are the rightly guided." This is due to the fact that such people are happy with the decision of Allāh and express it verbally by declaring, *"Verily to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return"* By saying this, they have attained the right path. [*Baydawi, v.2, p.118*]

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه says that together with the promise of various types of mercies, the mention of being rightly guided is a great favour of Allāh in itself

SOME POINTERS CONCERNING PATIENCE

A) It is the system of the world that difficulty and pain are always put to the fore. Neither ease nor adversity last forever. The Believer *(Mu'min)* exercises patience and is grateful to Allāh. Those who are impatient are deprived of reward and gradually, though it be after some time, they too will be forced to be patient and forget the calamity. However, this patience is of no avail. The patience which earns one virtue and reward is that which is exercised upon the first occurrence. Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, quoting the words of Allāh that, "Oh son of Adam! Should you exercise patience immediately upon the advent of a calamity, anticipating the reward thereof, I will accord you no less a reward than Heaven *(Jannah)*." [*Ibn Majah, v.1, p.144*]

Bukhari (*v.1 p.171*) and Muslim (*v.1 p.302*) record an event, narrated by Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed by a lady who was crying beside a grave. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Fear Allāh and exercise patience." The woman, not recognising the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم retorted, "Go away! Leave me alone because the calamity which has afflicted me has not afflicted you (i.e. If the same had befallen you, then you

would know what it is like)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم walked away. When someone informed the woman who it was to whom she had spoken so harshly, she hastened to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم presence. She was surprised not to find any guard at the door because she expected that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم lived in luxury and employed guards at the door. It was astonishing to her that the leader of the creation led such a simple life. Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم she said, "I did not recognise you (due to which I spoke the way I did)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her, "True patience is that which is exercised upon the initial advent of the calamity because after the expiry of some time, it will come on its own)."

This hadith highlights the fact that the patience referred to in the Qur'ān and hadith, regarding which numerous virtues have been expounded, is that patience which is exercised upon the initial onset of the adversity. Immediately upon the death of a person, or upon losing a sum of wealth the heart is grieved. To be patient at this instance holds great value. In reality, patience is that which is exercised at the time when the heart aches because, with the passage of time, the effect will naturally decrease until it is no longer felt. After a while, when the grief is forgotten, this will not be termed patience, neither does it hold any virtue. A Believer *(Mu'min)* and a non-believer *(kāfir)* are all the same in this regard. The patience for which a person is rewarded is the one exercised when the grief is still fresh, the heart is restless, evil thoughts plague the mind, the tongue wants to object to Allāh and the soul yearns to act contrary to the Islamic Laws *(Shari'ah)*. Patience at this time is a source of great reward.

B) For the heart to be grieved upon the demise of someone, or the eyes to shed tears, or for the tongue to express the grief, are not signs of impatience. It is narrated in Bukhari [*v.1 p.174*] that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was present when his son Ibrahīm رضى الله عنه was about to leave the world. Some tears welled up in his eyes, upon which Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Auf رضى الله عنه enquired, "How is it that you weep, O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم? (since the common people weep at the loss of their children)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "This is a natural compassion which Allāh has placed in the heart. Tears may flow and the heart may be grieved, but the tongue will only say that which is pleasing to Allāh. O Ibrahīm! We are indeed saddened by your separation."

Another hadith tells us that Allāh does not punish a person for the tears of the eye nor for the grief of the heart but will punish for the utterances of the tongue; or may forgive the same. [*Bukhari v.1 p.174*] i.e. Punishment will be metted out for any objections made against Allāh. If a person says that he is happy with the decree of Allāh, wherein good lies, then Allāh will be merciful towards him.

C) Just as the uttering of any wrong word is prohibited and constitutes a sign of impatience, so too will be the carrying out of any deed which is contrary to Sabr or which is the practice of non-Muslims. Some people are in the habit of slapping their faces when confronted by any difficulty, especially upon the death of a child. They even bang their heads against the wall, tear their clothes, and say foolish things like, "It was my only surviving child. Could not Allāh find another life to take?" These are all ignorant practices. To object to Allāh constitutes an act of disbelief *(Kufr)*. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person is not from amongst us who slaps

his face, tears his clothes and utters complaints of ignorance." [*Muslim, v.1, p.70*]

In certain places all the hair is shaved off as a token of mourning. It is also generally the practice of women to wail and scream excessively. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that he shall have nothing to do with those who shave their heads, wail excessively and tear their clothing. [*Muslim, v.1, pg.70*]

Upon the demise of someone dear, some women wail so much that it can be heard outside the house. For six months up to a year they would sit before a visitor and continue weeping. They would address their deceased saying, "Oh my beloved! Where have you gone? To whom have you left me? You were so perfect ..." In this manner they continue talking and crying. This becomes their daily practice for months on end in spite of the prohibition from the Islamic laws *(Shari'ah)*. It is reported in a hadith that, "Allāh curses the one who wails as well as the listener." [*Abu Dawūd*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also cursed such people. The listeners are also included in the curse because they become the cause for this wailing, which is never practised in solitude. It is recorded in "Muslim" [*p. 303*] that the people who do not repent for their wailing will be raised on the Day of Judgment in such a way that they will be clothed with garments of tar and dermatitis. The tar referred to is an extract of a tree which the Arabs used to apply on a rash, which had an acidic effect. The itch burns out, eventually offering relief On the Day of Judgment, the one who wailed will be made to suffer from severe dermatitis. It will be as if he is weaning clothing of rash. The tar will be applied on this, causing the person to suffer even more. It is common practice that when a person who suffers from eczema is given tar to apply, the resultant pain experienced is unbearable. If this is the pain of this world, one cannot imagine what it will be like in the Hereafter. May Allāh save us all. Āmīn. The eventual result of such medicinal applications is relief, but in the Hereafter it will only bring more pain and difficulty. The itch will not disappear but it will be further intensified.

D) In the hadith we are taught an addition to the phrase, *"Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Rajiūn"*. The mother of the believers, Sayyidah Umm Salmah رضى الله عنها reports, "I heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, 'Allāh will definitely grant a person something better than that which he has lost if he recites, at the time of the loss, *'Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Rajiūn. Allāh Humma Ajirni Fi Musībati Wakhluf Ii Khayram Min Ha.'* ('Verily to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. Oh Allāh grant a reward in my calamity and grant me something better in exchange'). When my husband Abu Salmah رضى الله عنه passed away I thought, "Who can be better than him? His family was the first to migrate to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Nevertheless I recited this supplication and Allāh replaced my husband with none other than the Prophet *(Rasūl of Allāh)* صلى الله عليه وسلم who was definitely better than Abu Salmah.' [*Muslim, v.1, p.300*]

E) Thus far, we have gathered from the numerous Ahādīth that all worldly adversities and calamities serve to eradicate sins from a Muslim. They serve to raise his ranks and are an expiation for his sins which will ultimately protect him from the chastisement of the grave and the Day of Judgment. It is incumbent upon the believer *(Mu'min)* to bear every situation with tolerance and gratitude. He should have a strong hope in the promised rewards and should be rest

assured that both favourable and adverse situations augur well.

True difficulty is the lot of the non-believer *(kāfir)* who suffers without gaining any reward for his suffering. The hardship of a believer *(Mu'min)* is really none at all because of the immense rewards he accrues thereby. This does not mean that he should not ask Allāh for cure and favourable conditions. Just as reward is attained through patience, reward is also gained through gratitude. One should continue supplicating for good fortune, but should misfortune overtake one, tolerance should be shown.

F) Many people do not understand the divine wisdom behind favourable and adverse conditions. They make foolish statements to the effect that calamities seem to befall only the Muslims. They make absurd comments that the non—believers possess mansions and palaces while Muslims have only promises of paradise. Some say that Allāh lavishes His favours upon others while he leaves His own in poverty, destitution and other misery. Such ignorant people do not understand that it is because of people like themselves that the Muslims suffer such grief. These distressful situations are an atonement for sins and a means of raising their ranks. They are means of safety from the punishment of the Hereafter, which is in reality a great favour. By suffering a little anguish in this world, one is saved from the grievous torments of the Hereafter.

Since the non-believer *(kāfir)* has no pleasures in store for him in the Hereafter, there awaits for him only punishment. For this reason, he is given more in this world and has to suffer less hardship. If any non-believer *(kāfir)* was of any service to mankind or performed any commendable act, he will receive his reward in this world while there will be absolutely nothing for him in the Hereafter. He will abide in Hell for eternity.

Bukhari رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه who says, "I met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while the latter was lying on a straw mat. Between the mat and his body was no bedding. As a result, the mat left an imprint upon his body. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was resting against a leather pillow, which was filled, with the bark of a date palm. I said, 'O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Ask Allāh to bestow wealth upon your Ummah followers. The Persians and the Romans are very affluent whereas they do not even worship Allāh." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "O son of Khattāb! Are you also dwelling in this misconception? Do you not know that these people are given the good things in this world and will have nothing in reserve for the next." Another narration of the same hadith reads, "Do you not prefer that they enjoy this world while we enjoy the next?' [*Mishkātul Masābīh, p. 447*]

﴿إِنَّ ٱلصَّفَا وَٱلْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَآئِرِ ٱللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ ٱلْبَيْتَ أَوِ ٱعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿158﴾

(158) Verily Safa and Marwah are amongst the signs of Allāh. So whoever performs Hajj or Umrah of the House, there shall be no sin upon him should he go to and forth between the two. Whoever performs a good act of his free will, then surely Allāh is Most Grateful, All Knowing.

THE LEGISLATION AND INCEPTION OF MOVING BETWEEN SAFA AND MARWAH

"Sha'āir" is the plural of "Sha'ira" which means 'sign' or 'token.' Safa and Marwa are two hills close to the Ka'ba. During Hajj and Umrah people walk seven times between the two. This act is called "Sa'ī.' This act is Wājib *(compulsory)* in both Hajj and Umrah. The two places are said to be from amongst the signs of Allāh, meaning that they are from the signs of Dīn *(religion)*. The Sa'ī is one of the practices of Hajj and one of its five fundamentals. For this reason, these two hills have great importance in Islām.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه gives us insight into the inception of this practice in the following hadith of Bukhari, (*v.1, p.474*). He says that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, in accordance with the command of Allāh, left his wife, Hājra عليها السلام and his son Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام in Makkah (which was then just barren ground). They had with them only-some dates and a water bag. When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام began to leave, his wife walked behind him asking, "O Ibrahīm! Are you leaving us here? There are no people here and nothing else." This she repeated several times, but each time she received no reply. Finally she asked, "Did Allāh instruct you to do this?" When he replied in the affirmative, she remarked, "In that case, Allāh will not allow us to be destroyed." Thereafter Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام proceeded, leaving the two alone.

The mother continued to breastfeed her child and drink from the waterbag. When the water was exhausted, she and her infant child grew thirsty. Seeing her child in a restless condition, she ascended the mount of Safa to see whether any people were approaching. When she could not see anyone she hastened to Marwah, running through the valley in between. There too she could sight no one. Once again she hurried back to Safa and again to Marwah. In this manner she went to and fro seven times. Upon reaching this point Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه repeated the words of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "For this reason, people perform the Sa'ī between Safa and Marwah (i.e. in commemoration of her act)."

Upon the final descent from Marwah, she heard a sound and tried to remain calm. She then listened attentively and she heard it again. Addressing the voice she said, "Oh speaker! You have made yourself heard. If you have any help to offer, then render it." Suddenly she witnessed an angel scraping the ground with his heel, from which water emerged. Sayyidah Hājra عليها السلام began making a form of retaining wall around it and filled her waterbag. The water continued to gush forth. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه again quoted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "May Allāh have mercy upon the mother of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. Had she left it to be, this water of Zamzam would have flowed throughout the earth."

She continued to drink from the well and to feed her child. The angels would reassure her not to fear since Allāh would not allow them to be destroyed because this child and his father will construct the house of Allāh in this place. They added that Allāh would never destroy His own, the faithful. (After this the narration of Bukhari mentions the settlement of the Bani Jurhum tribe there and the marriage of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام to a lady from amongst them. It also

goes on to mention the return of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and the construction of the Ka'ba.) Allāh loved this action of Sayyidah Hājra عليها السلام so much that he included it in the rites of every person who performs Hajj or Umrah. This is the unique feature of every person who sacrifices for the sake of Allāh.

THE SA'Ī DURING THE PERIOD OF IGNORANCE

It is recorded in Bukhari (*v.2 p.646*) that Sayyidina Āsim bin Sulaymān رحمة الله عليه says that they enquired from Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه concerning Safa and Marwah. He replied, "During the days of ignorance, we used to move between the two. Upon becoming Muslims, we stopped this practice whereupon Allāh revealed the verse, *"Verily Safa and Marwah are amongst the signs of Allāh."*

In Muslim (*v.1, p.414*), numerous Ahādīth are recorded concerning this. One of them is narrated by Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها who says, "During the days of ignorance, the Ansār used to pay homage to the famous idol Manāt. They considered the Sa'ī impermissible, so when they performed Hajj with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم they mentioned this to him, upon which the above verse was revealed." She added further, "Allāh will not accept the Hajj of a person who does not perform the Sa'ī."

Bukhari (*v.1, p.222*) reports the hadith wherein Sayyidina Abu Bakr bin Abdur Rahmān رحمة الله عليه says, "I have heard from numerous men of knowledge that people generally performed the Sa'ī during the time of ignorance, except for those mentioned in the above hadith of Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها. When the verses of Tawāf were revealed (in Surah Hajj), no mention was made of Safa and Marwah. The companions enquired, 'Oh the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, during the period of ignorance we used to carry out the Sa'ī between Safa and Marwah. Allāh has instructed about the Tawāf, so what about the Sa'ī? Is there any sin in its performance?' At this instance the above verse was revealed."

Sayyidina Abu Bakr bin Abdur Rahmān رحمة الله عليه then added, "The verse was revealed with reference to both groups; those who practiced Sa'ī before Islām and those who did not." Hāfidh Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه has deliberated in much detail about this subject and has exhaustively collaborated the various Ahādīth in his book "Fathul Bāri" (*v.3, p. 500*)

Nasa'ī records that there stood two copper idols atop Safa and Marwah. One was called Asāf and the other Nā'ila. The idolaters would touch each of them when performing their Hajj or Umrah during the period of ignorance. Sayyidina Sha'bi رحمة الله عليه says that the idol atop Safa was called Asāf while the one upon Marwah was called Nā'ila. People would conduct the Sa'ī because of the presence of these two there. When Islām came, these two idols were destroyed. However, the people felt that the Sa'ī was an act of ignorance performed only as homage to these two idols and had to be discarded in Islām. This was the reason for which the verse was revealed.

THE KNOWLEDGEABLE REPLY OF SAYYIDAH AYSHA رضى الله عنها

The nephew of Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها once asked her, 'Allāh revealed in His verse, *'there shall be no sin upon him should he go to and forth between the two.'* It appears from the words *'no sin'* that there would be no sin should one omit the

Sa'ī as well." Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها replied, 'O my nephew! If it had been as you say, then the verse would have been phrased thus, 'there shall be no sin upon him should he not go to and forth between the two." She then added, 'This verse was revealed for the Ansār, who abstained from performing the Sa'ī. They queried whether to go to Safa and Marwah or not, whereupon this verse was revealed, informing them that there is no harm in its performance. The Sa'ī was enjoined by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and none may omit it." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.222*]

THE LAWS OF SA'Ī

1. The Sa'ī is not permitted with out first performing Tawāf, The Sa'ī of Hajj may be performed after the Tawāf Qudūm or after the Tawāf Ziyārah, the latter of which is better However for the one performing a Hajj of Qir'ān, Sa'ī is better after the Tawāf Qudūm.

2. Previously, there existed a depression between Safa and Marwah. It was through here that Sayyidah Hājra عليها السلام hurried. For this reason, those performing Hajj Umrah also run here. Today this depression no longer exists since the land is now flattened and an upper floor has been constructed. To mark the place, green pillars and lights have been placed between which people run.

3. There are seven circuits in the Sa'ī From Safa to Marwah is one, and back to Safa is another In this manner; seven are completed, beginning from Safa and terminating at Marwah.

4. It is Wājib (compulsory) to perform the Sa'ī by oneself. No person may substitute another. The only exception is the person who fell unconscious before adorning the Ihrām. An other person may adopt the Ihrām on his behalf as well as perform the Tawāf Qudūm and Sa'ī for him. This may be done on condition that he does regain consciousness before all of this.

5. The 'Dam' (compensation) becomes compulsory on the person who left Makkah before performing the Sa'ī.

6. The running (actually jogging) between the green pillars is only for men. Women should not do it.

"Whoever performs a good act of his own free will, then surely Allāh is ever, Grateful, Most Merciful." This refers to any non-obligatory action which will surely bring reward from Allāh. Allāh is most appreciative of any action a person may perform. No action, whether good or evil, goes unnoticed by Him.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِن بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ ۙ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ (159) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (160)

(159) Certainly those who conceal the clear things and guidance which We have revealed, after We had expounded them in the Book for the people; such folk (the concealers) are cursed by Allāh and by all those who curse. (160) Except for those who repent, amend and clarify. These are the ones whom I will forgive, for verily I am The Greatest Acceptor of repentance, The Most Merciful.

THE PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE WHO CONCEAL THE TRUTH

It is written in 'Asbābun Nuzūl' [*v.1, p.43*], that this verse was revealed with reference to those scholars of the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* who concealed the verses of Rajam (the stoning to death of a married adulterer). It also refers to their concealing of the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which appeared in the Torah. The tafsīr "Durrul Manthūr" records a hadith that Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه and some other Ansār asked some Jewish scholars about certain aspects of the Torah. They refused to furnish answers. The above ayah (verse) was revealed with reference to this incident. [*v.1, p.16l*]

'Durrul Manthūr' [*v.1, p. 162*] also reports the statement of Sayyidina Abul Āliya رحمة الله عليه who said, "This verse makes reference to the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* who, due to jealousy hid the personality and characteristics of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from the people. (They even hid the fact that the Torah made mention of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and that it described him despite the fact that it was written in the scriptures before them.

The author of 'Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that the noble Prophets عليهم السلام received clear verses which included the mention of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* hid this from others. The word *"guidance"* is linked to the word *"clear things"* and refers to all aspects of guidance. This includes belief in the seal of Prophets, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Although this verse was specifically revealed about the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)*, its application is general i.e. It would be a great sin for any person to conceal the knowledge of Dīn *(religion)*. [*v.1, p.26-27*]

A hadith is recorded in "Bukhari" (*v.1 p.22*), in which Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه said, 'If it was not for two verses of the Qur'ān (wherein warnings are mentioned concerning the concealment of truth), I would not have narrated a single hadith. He then recited the above verse."

"Sunan Ibn Majah" reports the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as having said, "That person will be given a bridle of fire on the Day of Judgment who conceals any such knowledge through which Allāh may grant any religious benefit.' (*p. 23*)

Concerning these people Allāh warns, *"Such folk are cursed by Allāh and by all those who curse."* The meaning of a curse is to be removed from the mercy of Allāh. Therefore, Allāh will not be merciful to such people and all others will

also invoke the same upon them. The exegesis *(tafsīr)* of "Durrul Manthūr' (*v.1 p,162*) narrates from Sayyidina Atā رضى الله عنه that " *all those who curse*" refers to all humans, jinn and every living creature on this earth. This curse will apply to all of them *'except those who repent, amend and clarify* (their wrong).'

CONDITIONS FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF REPENTANCE OF THOSE WHO CONCEAL THE TRUTH AND LEAD OTHERS ASTRAY

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that those will be excused from the curse who repent for hiding the truth and from all other sins regarding which repentance has to be sought (*v.2, p.28*). He then goes on to explain the word *"amend"*. He writes that, together with repentance, amending the wrong which has been done is also necessary. Whatever rights were infringed should be redressed, whether they be owed to the Creator or to the creation. Those people who may have been misled should now be advised correctly. These people should be informed that they were prevented from the truth and should accept what is now being said. Whatever changes may have been made to the book of Allāh should be corrected and substituted with the correct teachings.

He then goes on to explain the word *'clarify"*. He writes that whatever was concealed should now be clearly explained. The repentance of these people will be completed only when these two conditions are fulfilled i.e. amendment and clarification. Whatever ill may have been caused by their words or actions should be redressed since these would have caused many people to go astray.

This point is of extreme importance and few pay heed to it. Many 'free thinking' ignorant people, who consider themselves to be jurists and reformers, wander far from the truth. Considering themselves to be great writers, they attempt to display literary prowess. Such people are far from the *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamā'ah* and propagate their false teachings. Should such people choose to repent, their repentance should not merely be done in private. They should make public declarations to inform the public that whatever beliefs or actions they may have propounded in contradiction with the *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamā'ah,* were wrong. Nowadays, we live in an era of corruption. Many people carry out clear acts of disbelief *(Kufr)* which they continue to propagate. When they realise the truth, they are remorseful and quietly repent. It is incumbent upon such people to "*repent, amend and clarify*. "Each of the three actions is imperative.

THE FIRST LESSON: It should be understood that the only person who can pass Judgment (fatwa) about the matters of Dīn *(religion)* is the one who is truly learned Scholar (*an Ālim)* in the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, matters of Lawful *(halāl)* and Unlawful *(harām)*, as well as all other religious injunctions. The consequences of issuing an incorrect ruling is indeed grave. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'The person who is asked about any knowledge which he possesses, but who does not disclose the same, will be given a bridle of fire to wear on the Day of Judgment." [*Tirmidhi in the Chapter of Knowledge*]

It is learnt from this hadith that the responsibility of imparting knowledge is reserved for those who themselves possess such knowledge. The person who

ventures to impart such knowledge while he is not qualified to do so. will fall into the pit of misguidance. At the same time, he will drag others with him.

"Bukhari" (*v.2, p.7 10*) reports that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه said, "Those people who have some knowledge should expound it while those who have no knowledge should say Allāh knows best'. Instead of pretending to know, it is wise to say Allāh knows best' when you have no knowledge of something. Allāh instructed his Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "say *I ask not of you any recompense, neither am I from amongst those who pretend."*

It is for this reason that Scholars (Ulama) state, "To say 'I do not know constitutes half of knowledge." It will be noticed of many an ignorant person that they can never say 'I do not know'. They are prepared to comment on every subject. Without any knowledge of Dīn *(religion)*, they write books which include incorrect subject matter. It will also be noticed that when any reliable and experienced Mufti is questioned, then some ignorant bystander will reply before the Mufti can have a say. This is so because people have no perception of religious responsibility and accountability in the Hereafter.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "The person who is most bold to issue rulings is most bold to enter the fire of Hell *(Jahannam)*" [*Sunan Dārmi, v.1, p53*]

To comment on the Qur'ān, to report a hadith, or to expound a ruling is indeed a very great responsibility. Sayyidina Muhammad bin Munkadir رحمة الله عليه said, "Without doubt, the Ālim (religious scholar) is the intermediary between Allāh and His bondsmen. So think well about the discharging of this responsibility." [*Sunan Dārmi, v.1, pg.50*]

The effective method of discharging this responsibility is not to answer by mere estimation and to say nothing without possessing full knowledge about the subject. Should one have no knowledge concerning something, one should make it clear that one does not know. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever receives a ruling which was not based on proper knowledge or research, the sin is upon the one who has issued the ruling.' [*Sunan Dārmi v.1 p.53. Abu Dawūd, v.2, p.159*]

A ruling should be properly researched. Thereafter, should any error become evident, its rectification should be announced and the person to whom it was issued should be duly informed.

THE SECOND LESSON. Another important aspect of issuing rulings is that the questioner should be able to understand the answer fully. If he does understand, he should also be able to correctly interpret the same. His understanding should be such that should the situation recur, he-must not fall into error.

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه stated, Explain to the people only such things, which are within their understanding. Would you like people to falsify Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Because by telling them things beyond their grasp, they may falsify Allāh and His Prophet the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.24*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidina Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه, "That person will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* who meets Allāh without ever ascribing partners to Him." Sayyidina Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه asked. "Should I not convey this glad tidings to the people?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "No, for I fear that people will merely rely on this (and not perform any good actions)." [*Bukhari. v.1 p.24*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه said, "The person who replies to each and every person's question is certainly insane," [*"Sunan Dārmi", v.1 p.56, Tabarani in the "Kabir"*]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَمَاتُوا۟ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

(161) Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, upon these people is the curse of Allāh, the angels and the entire mankind. (162) They will dwell therein forever. Neither will their punishment be lessened nor will they be given any respite.

THE CURSE AND PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE WHO DIE AS INFIDELS

This verse mentions the chastisement of those people who die in infidelity. The general context of the verse would include even those Jews who remained obstinate in their disbelief and also encouraged others to do the same. Not only did they not accept the truth, but they hid the attributes of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, preventing others from accepting. The verse will also refer to the Christians, idolaters, atheists; as well as to those who reject the Prophets عليهم السلام, Islāmic beliefs, fundamental Islāmic principles and the finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Also included in the warning are the heretics fire-worshippers and apostates. In short, every infidel *(kāfir)* will qualify for these curses of Allāh. His angels and the entire mankind. It was discussed in the previous verse that curse denotes being far from the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, the furthest one can be from Allāh's mercy is to spend an eternity in the fire of Hell. This is the greatest curse. For this reason Allāh then mentions, "They will abide therein forever." Sayyidina Abul Āliya رحمة الله عليه explains that they will remain in Hell and under the curse until eternity. [*Durrul Manthūr" v.1 p.167*]

It may occur to one that the Infidels do not curse one another, so why should the curse of the entire mankind be on them'? The reply to this is that although they do not curse each other in this world they will, most assuredly do so in the next. In Surah Ankabūt, Allāh says, *'Then, on the Day of Judgment, you will turn your backs to each other and curse one another. Your final abode will be the hellfire and you will have no assistants.'* [*verse 25*]

In Surah A'rāf the following appears, *"Whenever any group will enter (Hell) it will curse another. Eventually, when all will find the other also in there, the latter ones will say regarding the former ones, O our Lord, these were the ones who led us astray, so give them a double punishment."* [*verse 38*]

Surah Ahzāb has the following verse, "And they will say, O our Lord! We followed our leaders and elders who led us away from the correct path. O our Lord! Grant them a double punishment and curse them ever so greatly. " [*verses 67/8*]

In the exegesis *(tafsīr)* "Durrul Manthūr", Sayyidina Abul Āliya رحمة الله عليه says that on the Day of Judgment, the infidel will be resurrected and, Allāh, His angels and the whole of mankind will invoke their curses upon him.

'The punishment will not be lessened for them.' Similarly Allāh says in Surah Nahl, "When the oppressors see the punishment it will not be lightened for them, nor will they be granted respite." (*verse 85*)

In Surah Mu'min Allāh says, *"The people in Hell will say to the keepers of Hell, Supplicate to your Lord to lessen a day of the punishment for us. They (the keepers) will ask, Did your messengers not come to you with clear signs?' The people will reply, 'Certainly. ' The keepers will then say, 'Then you supplicate. The supplication of the disbelievers is lost* "[*verses 49 and 50*]

"And they will not be given respite." Respite is only given to one who makes an appeal. The Infidels who are doomed to eternal punishment will not be allowed to plead their case and can therefore expect no respite.

Allāh says in Surah Mursalāt, *"On this day they will be rendered incapable of speech, neither will they be permitted to plead their innocence. Destruction will be the lot of the falsifiers upon that day."* [*verses 35/6/7*]

SOME RULINGS CONCERNING CURSES

RULING 1: It is permissible to invoke the curse of Allāh upon liars or oppressors in general. However, it is not permissible to invoke the same upon a specific person, whether he be a Muslim or a infidel. To specifically curse a particular individual will only be permitted if it is known for certain that the person died as a infidel *(kāfir)*, e.g. Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Abu Lahab, Abu Jahl, etc. A person who is alive and may even be a infidel *(kāfir)* cannot be cursed since it cannot be said with certainty whether he will die in disbelief.

Many people are careless in this regard and even invoke curses on Muslims. Teachers are especially accustomed to such speech. Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Verily whenever someone curses another, the curse ascends to the heavens and finds the doors closed there. It then goes back earthwards, only to find its doors closed as well. Then it searches right and left for an exit, only to find none. It then finally descends upon the one who had uttered it." [*"Sunan Abu Dawūd", Chapter of Ādāb. v.2, p.3 16*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the wind once lifted a person's shawl, upon which he cursed the wind. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Do not curse it for verily it blows by the order of Allāh. Without doubt, whoever curses something which is not deserving of the curse, it will return unto him." [*Ibid*]

Ruling 2: Any statements synonymous to a curse will only be permissible

when it is used in accordance with certain principles. The Arabic term "Mardūd" (rejected) and the urdu word "phatkār" are used for invoking curses. Women are generally in the habit of using cursing words and their respective synonyms. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once proceeding for the Salāh of Eidul Fitr or Eidul Adha when he happened to pass by some women. He addressed them thus, "O Women! You should give charity for I have seen more of your gender in Hell." The women asked as to why this was so, upon which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "You curse very often and are not appreciative towards your husbands." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh", p. 13, from Bukhari and Muslim*]

(163) And your Lord is but One Lord. There is no other Deity besides Him; The Compassionate, The Merciful.

THE TRUE DEITY IS BUT ONE

In this verse, the oneness of Allāh is expressed and the belief of the idolaters is rejected. It asserts that He is unique and unrivalled, both in His being and in His attributes. He is the One, Most Compassionate and Most Merciful. He has no match, neither any peer nor any equal. He is the One, Independent, with no partner. Since He alone created everything, only He deserves to be worshipped. He is Most Merciful unto all His creation. None of the false gods which people associate as partners to Allāh are worthy of worship; neither are they creators, nor sovereigns, nor compassionate, nor merciful as He is.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ
بِمَا يَنفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ وَمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن مَّآءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا
مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ ٱلرِّيَٰحِ وَٱلسَّحَابِ ٱلْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ لَأٓيَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (164)

(164) Verily in the creation of the heavens and earth; in the alternating of the night and day; in the huge ships which traverse the oceans carrying goods of benefit to man; in that (water) which Allāh showers from the heavens, reviving the earth after its death, dispersing all types of creatures therein; and in the ordinance of the winds; and the obedient clouds suspended between the earth and sky are signs for those who have intelligence.

THE PROOF OF ALLĀH'S UNITY

In the exegesis *(tafsīr)* "Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1 pg.163*) it is stated that when the verse, *'And your Lord is but One Lord."* was revealed, the idolaters were surprised that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم claimed that there is only one Allāh. They requested proof for this claim, upon which Allāh revealed this verse under

discussion. In this verse, Allāh's authority of being the Creator and Owner is established, together with mention of His supreme control over all affairs. The idolaters also recognised that none other possessed this supreme control except Allāh so there could be no option for them but to accept that Allāh is One.

Sayyidina Atā رحمة الله عليه narrates that when the verse *"And your Lord is but one Lord"* was revealed in Madinah, the Infidels *(kuffār)* of Makkah wondered as to how everyone's Lord could be One. Upon this, Allāh revealed the above verse (*164*). If one contemplates upon this verse, it will be understood that Allāh is the only One worthy of worship and He is the Creator of each and every thing. [*Durrul Manthūr" v.1, p. 174*]

It is indeed strange that the idolaters worship their false gods in spite of the fact that Allāh created them, provides their sustenance, nurtures and nourishes them, grants them children and creates all the essentials for their eating and drinking. What is even more astounding is when the idolaters of Makkah were informed of Allāh's Oneness, they exclaimed, *"What, have all the deities been made into One! This is indeed a strange thing."* [*Surah Sād, verse 5*]

A strange phenomenon of this world is that when something becomes a trend, then no matter how erroneous and evil it may be, because it is in vogue, people consider it to be a good thing. It is incumbent upon every human being to worship Allāh and no other. This is the religion of man which was preached and practiced by the father of man, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام as well as by all the Prophets عليهم السلام after him. When Polytheism *(shirk)* became rife and widespread, people became so accustomed to it that the call to monotheism seemed strange and foreign to them.

The verse mentions such things which every person accepts to be totally in Allāh's control. These phenomena are such that their creation and continuance are solely dependant on Allāh's will; no other being has jurisdiction over them.

THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

This is the first sign discussed by Allāh. Allāh say in Surah Zumar, *"Definitely if you ask them who created the heavens and the earth they will say, Allāh* [*verse 38*]

Surah Ahqāf contains the verse. *"Tell them, Show me what those whom you worship besides Allāh have created from the earth? Do they share a partnership in the heavens? Bring forth a book which was before this one, or some piece of information if indeed you are truthful"* (*verse 4*)

THE ALTERNATION OF NIGHT AND DAY

This is the second sign which Allāh mentions in the verse under discussion. Allāh declares in verse 62 of Surah Furqān, *"He is the One who has made the night and day succeed each other (as a sign) for those who intend to take lesson or intend to show gratitude."*

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"He created the heavens and the earth with perfection. He folds the night into the day and folds the day into the night; and made the sun and moon bow in submission."* [*verse 5*]

Surah Fātir contains the following verse, *"He (Allāh) enters the night into the day and the day into the night. He has made the sun and moon subservient; Each one of the them travels up to its fixed hour. This is Allāh your Sustainer to whom belongs all Sovereignty. As for those whom you worship besides Allāh, they do not even own the skin of a date pit."* [*verse* 13]

The increase and decrease in the duration of night and day and its variation with place and time are all part of Allāh's divine system. Every intelligent person understands that none other has any say in these matters.

THE TRAVERSING OF SHIPS OVER THE SEA

"In the huge ships which traverse the oceans carrying goods of benefit to man" This is the third sign mentioned in the verse under discussion. The ocean itself is a great creation of Allāh in which numerous types of creatures are found as well as other things which are of value to man. The seas link one continent to another, without which goods would have to be transported over great distances of land. Allāh has permitted ships to travel upon the sea. If He so willed He would not have allowed any ship to travel upon the surface of the sea and caused them all to sink. A needle cannot float across the surface of the sea, yet ships weighing hundreds of tons and laden with many more tons of goods travel across the oceans. These goods are transported from Europe to Asia, and from America to Australia. By virtue of this the people of one continent reap benefit from the produce of other continents. In spite of the extensive use of airplanes and railways, man cannot do without the service of ships.

Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"You see the ships cleaving their way through the ocean, that you may earn from the bounty of Allāh, and that you may show gratitude."* [*verse 14*]

When travelling by sea, one only has the water below him and the skies above. The ship is weighty, the waves continuously thrashing its sides while the fear of unfavourable winds and sinking are ever prevalent. Under these conditions, it is only Allāh who can offer one any protection. He keeps both occupants and goods completely safe and allows them to reach their destination. When the sea turns stormy, people become frightened and are greatly distressed. At such times one s, attention turns to none other than Allāh. A person cries out only to Him, forgetting all false gods.

Allāh declares in Surah Ankabūt, *"Suddenly, when they board a ship they call unto Allāh with sincere conviction. Then when He rescues them by delivering them onto dry land, they ascribe partners unto Him, displaying ingratitude for what We have given them and so that they may enjoy. Soon they will come to know."* [*verse* 65]

This is the strange psychology of the idolater. When afflicted by any adversity, only then does he remember Allāh and supplicate to Him. However, when the difficulty is removed, he continues his heretic practices and worships other gods.

THE SENDING OF RAINS

"In that (water) which Allāh showers from the heavens, reviving the earth – after - its death" In this phenomenon there is also clear indication of Allāh being the sole

Creator and Sovereign. None can deny the magnitude of this bounty, which benefits millions of people and animals. Plants and trees receive nourishment from the rain without exhausting its supply. Sweet, clean water descends from the sky by means of which plantations, orchards and gardens flourish. Dry, barren land is revived, dams are filled and man and animals, benefit for many months.

Many areas are such that they have no source of water except the rain since their wells have either too little water or are too deep. The rainwater has to be used for drinking, washing clothes as well as for watering fields. The people of these areas remain in eager anticipation for rain. When the rains do arrive, they all seem to come to life. Even those areas which depend on fresh water and rivers for irrigation are indebted to the rainfall. This is because rainwater falls upon the mountains, freezes and melts to form rivers.

Allāh mentions in Surah Shura, *"He is the One who sends the rains after people have become despondent, spreading His mercy. He is the Patron, worthy of praise."* [*verse 28*]

Allāh says in Surah Hā Mīm Sajda, *"And from amongst His signs, you see that the earth is lying barren, Then when we send the rains, it begins sprouting and flourishing. Verily the One who had given life to the earth will bring the dead back to life. Definitely He is Capable of all things."* [*verse 39*]

A verse from Surah Rūm reads, *"So look at the signs of Allāh's mercy and how life revives the earth after its death, undoubtedly, He gives life to the dead and He has power over all things."* [*verse 50*]

The drying up of the earth and the withering of its plants and trees is referred to as its death. Its flourishing and greenery are referred to as its life.

THE CREATION OF ANIMALS AND THE DISPERSING UPON THE EARTH

"and (Allāh) dispersed therein (the earth) every type of creature" This sentence is linked to the phrase 'anzala' (*"that which Allāh showers from the heavens"*). The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" is of the opinion that it is linked to the word 'ahyā' (*"reviving the earth"*). In Arabic, the word 'dābbah' (creatures) refers to everything which walks upon the earth even though the word is not generally used for large animals such as cows, buffaloes, camels, etc. These creatures of all types and species are amongst the signs of Allāh. Allāh has created them in large numbers, varying in type, temperament, form and characteristics. Allāh has made man dominant over all of them. Should a person sit back and ponder about the characteristics of each creature, countless expressions of Allāh's greatness come to the fore.

THE BLOWING OF THE WIND IN ALL DIRECTIONS

The sixth sign mentioned in this verse is, *"In the ordinance of the winds."* i.e. the power of Allāh is evident in the way He causes the winds to blow in various directions, sometimes even changing the course of some winds in the opposite direction. As Allāh desires, so He causes the winds to blow. Should He desire them to blow in certain directions or at certain speeds, He can do so. These winds

may be a form of punishment or mercy. Only Allāh has the authority to manipulate these winds. No one else can change their direction nor adjust their speeds.

Allāh says in Surah Rūm, *"And from His signs is that He sends the winds as carriers of glad tidings, so that He may allow you to taste of His mercy, and so that the ships sail by His order for you to gain from His bounty and show gratitude."* [*verse 46*]

Allāh dispatched a wind to punish the nation of Ād. This frightening wind raged for seven nights and eight days and destroyed the entire nation. On the other hand, the wind served as an aid to Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. It would transport him a distance of a month's journey in a single morning or evening. During the Battle of the Trench, Allāh sent a windstorm which forced the enemies of Islām to retreat. Their tents were blown away and their utensils overturned. Their faces were stung with the particles of flying sand. It was so severe and cold that it caused them to lose their senses and retreat. Allāh makes reference to this in Surah Ahzāb when He says, *"Oh people of Belief (Imān) (Call to mind Allāh favour upon you when the army came to you and Allāh dispatched over them a windstorm and an army which you could not see. "*[*verse 9*]

Bukhari (*v.1 p.141*) narrates a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "By virtue of the Saba I was rendered help while the nation of Ād were destroyed with the Dabūr.' (Saba and Dabūr are names for specific types of winds).

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The wind brings mercy or punishment. When the wind blows, do not curse it but rather ask Allāh for the good that comes from, it and for protection from its evil." [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.239*]

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها reports that whenever a wind blew the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite the following Supplication, *"Allāh Humma Inni As'aluka Khayrahā Wa Khayra Mā Fihā Wa Khayra Ma Ursilai Bihi Wa A'ūdhu Bika Min Sharrihā Wa Sharri Ma Fiha Wa Sharri Ma Ursilat Bih."* (Oh Allāh I ask you for the good of this wind, the good which is the outcome of this wind, and the good which it brings, and I ask you for protection from the evil of this wind, the evil which is the out come of this wind, and the evil which it brings.")

THE SUBMISSION OF THE CLOUDS

'And the obedient clouds suspended between the heavens and the earth' This is the seventh sign mentioned wherein one may witness Allāh's power. The clouds are suspended in mid-air even though they are laden with water. When rain is pending, people begin preparing for it, whereas the clouds will only proceed to the destination specified by Allāh.

Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"It is He who sends the winds ahead of His mercy to make them happy Then when the winds carry the heavy clouds, We lead them towards some dry piece of land where We send the rain down; extracting by its agency all types of fruit. In the same way, We will cause the dead to rise up so that you take heed,"* [*verse 57*]

By means of the clouds, Allāh shaded the Bani Isrā'īl in the valley of Tīh. These clouds travelled wherever they went. It is only by the will of Allāh that

clouds are either heavy or light, or arrive at certain places. It is also commonly seen how at times they even disappear without sending any rain. The punishment of the people of Ād began with the sighting of a cloud. They did not receive any rain for some time and, having seen the cloud, they rejoiced, assuming it would bring rain. Because of the extreme heat at the time they all emerged on to an open plain. Instead of rain, a severe windstorm arose, which completely destroyed them.

Bukhari (*v.2 p215*) relates a hadith wherein Sayyidah Aysha رضی الله عنها says, "Whenever the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would see a cloud or an approaching wind, its effect could be noticed on his face. I once asked him, 'O the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم! People are always pleased to see the clouds, hoping for rain. Why do I detect concern on your face when you see clouds?' He replied, O Aysha! How can I be sure that they do not portend a punishment. A certain nation was punished by means of the same. When they saw a cloud approach, they said, 'This cloud will bring rain for us.' Instead it brought a grievous punishment to them."

Another hadith reports Sayyidah Aysha رضی الله عنها as saying, "Whenever some clouds would appear in the sky, the face of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would change colour. At times, he would go out and then come in, or pace up and down. When the rain would finally come, only then would his state of restlessness disappear." [*Muslim, v.1, p.294*]

All the factors mentioned in the verse clearly reflect the wonders of Allāh and point to the fact that only He is the Creator. Even those who refute the Unity of Allāh will accept that only He is capable of such creation. They would accept that it is only He who could exercise control over all these phenomenon. However, they do not admit His unity and continue to ascribe partners to Him. May Allāh guide them all.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ يَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ إِذْ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْعَذَابَ أَنَّ ٱلْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿165﴾

(165) There are some who ascribe partners to Allāh, displaying such love for them as they should love Allāh. However, the believers have a much greater love for Allāh. If the oppressive ones were to see the punishment, they would realise that all power belongs only to Allāh and verily Allāh is capable of inflicting the severest chastisement.

THE LOVE OF THE IDOLATERS FOR THEIR IDOLS AND THE PUNISHMENT FOR IT

After explaining monotheism *(Tauhīd)* together with its proofs, Allāh now discusses those people who ignore the oneness of Allah and ascribe partners to Him. These people had created other gods who they considered equal to Allāh. They worshipped them, took oaths in their name and sacrificed animals for

them. In this verse Allāh says that, *"they display such love for them as they should love Allāh"*

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2 p.34*) writes that the word "love" in this verse refers to reverence and obedience. It means that these people considered these false gods to be equal to Allāh, showing such reverence and obedience to them as they should be showing to Allāh. Allāh mentions in this verse that they love *"them"* (the Arabic word 'houm') instead of saying that they love *"these"* (the Arabic word 'haa'). By using a term which refers to living beings, Allāh wishes to draw our attention to the fact that these people actually considered these gods to be living equals of Allāh. Some commentators are of the opinion that the word *'partners"* ('andāda') refers to the leaders of the tribes and nations. This means that some people showed as much reverence and obedience to their leaders, as they should actually show to Allāh.

THE SUPERLATIVE LOVE OF THE BELIEVERS FOR ALLĀH

However, the believers have a greater love for Allāh." The believer's love for Allāh is deep rooted, firmly established and' perfect. Their love does not decrease and they never turn to another for assistance, neither will they worship any other. Conversely, the idolaters turn to Allāh when afflicted by any adversity An example of this (as was mentioned previously) is when they are in danger while at sea. At this time, they forget all other gods and supplicate only to Allāh for safety. This situation is also noted at other times of distress. At times, such people engage in the worship of a certain idol. Where after they carve out another before which they place their foreheads.

Ironically, it also happens that the idolaters make an idol out of sweets, then consume them when the need arises. On the occasion of Diwali (a Hindu religious festival), the iddaters of India build idols out of coarse sugar. Thereafter these are sold and everyone gather to eat them.

"If the oppressive ones here to see the punishment, they would realize that all power belongs only to Allāh; and verily Allāh is capable of inflicting the severest chastisement" At this time they will experience much regret, remorse and shame. However all this will be to no avail. Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean: Upon sighting the punishment, if they come to know that all might and power belongs only to Allāh, great remorse *"will overtake them."*

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes in his tafsīr, *"If these people were to see in this very world what punishment will accrue to them (as a result of their disbelief and idolatry), they would desist immediately."*

Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه quotes other commentators "Who say, "Should the idolaters come to know that their fabricated gods cannot benefit them whatsoever, they' would realise that all power belongs only to Allāh. None can give benefit nor harm besides Him. This has also been stated in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2. p.35*).

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتُّبِعُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ وَرَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَسْبَابُ

(166) وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا۟ مِنَّا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ حَسَرَٰتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَمَا هُم بِخَٰرِجِينَ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ (167)

(166) When those who were followed (i.e. the leaders) disassociate themselves from those who followed them; and they see the punishment; and all ties between them are severed. (167)Those who had followed will say, "If only we could return (to-the world), then we too will disassociate ourselves from them as they now do to us." In this manner, Allāh will show them their actions as a cause of regret to them. They will never be able to escape from the fire.

THE DISASSOCIATION OF FOLLOWERS FROM THEIR LEADERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT (QIYĀMAH) AND THEIR SEVERE REMORSE

In this verse further mention is made of the extreme regret, disgrace and disgust which the disbelievers will experience on the Day of Judgment. There were many leaders and people of standing within societies and nations who were ardently followed by their children or others. Such leaders led the people astray by their fallacious teachings. On the Day of Judgment, these leaders will have nothing to do with their followers, denying any association with them. This will be at a time when they would already have passed through the world and died practising disbelief and idolatry. At that time, neither will Belief *(Imān)* (belief avail one nor will one be able to return to the world. There will be no alternative but to suffer the punishment. All relationships will cease to exist and no one will be in a position to assist another in any way. In this regard Allāh says, *"The oppressive folk will have no ally, nor any intercessor who will be hearkened to."* (*Surah Mu'min, verse 18*)

When these leaders behave in this manner, their followers will wish to be sent back to the world so that they can disassociate themselves from these leaders.

"In this way Allāh will show them their actions as a *cause of regret to them."* Just as they would witness each other's disassociation, so too will all their other actions be shown to them: as a result, they will experience great remorse. This remorse alone will be a great punishment besides the one already waiting in store for them. They will regret why they had not followed the prophets عليهم السلام, stayed clear of disbelief, and omit evil deeds since all these things would have saved them from Hell. This delayed realisation and lamentation will not rescue them from the fire of Hell. Until eternity they would have to suffer and *"they would never be able to escape from the fire."*

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ كُلُوا۟ مِمَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (168) إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلسُّوٓءِ وَٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (169)

(168) O people, eat of the lawful and wholesome things of the earth, and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan (Shaytān). Indeed, he is your man West enemy (169) He of Satan (Shaytān) instructs you only to perpetrate evil deeds, acts of immodesty, and to say such things about Allāh which you do not know.

THE INSTRUCTION TO EAT LAWFUL FOODS AND STAY AWAY FROM OF SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)*

These verses permit the eating of only what is lawful and pure, thereafter warning us not to follow in the footsteps of Satan *(Shaytān)*. In following him lies only harm and destruction. There can be no good in his counsel and enticement. He is a sworn enemy to man who has dedicated his existence to destroying man. Since he is destined for Hell, his desire is to take all of mankind with him. He always instructs what is evil and shows the way to all that is immoral, shameless and promiscuous. He also exerts himself to entice people to succumb to idolatry and incorrect beliefs. Then he makes people say that whatever evil they perpetrate is by the command of Allāh and to please Him.

Allāh says in Surah A'rāf [*verse 28*], *"Whenever they do something vile they say, 'We found our forefathers doing the same and Allāh has instructed us to do it.' Tell them, 'Most definitely Allāh does not instruct foul things. Do you ascribe to Allāh such things which you know not?"*

It is recorded in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (by Wāhidy) on (*p.43*) that the verse, *"Oh people, eat of the lawful"* was revealed with reference to the tribes of Bani Thaqīf and Bani Khuza'a. They had declared certain crops and animals unlawful for themselves and attached certain conditions and restrictions to these animals, naming them "Bahira,"

"Sā'iba, "Wasila," and "Hāma.' The detailed discussion of all these types of animals will be noted (*Insha Allāh*) in the commentary of Surah Mā'idah and Surah An'ām.

It was only Satan *(Shaytān)* who had prompted them to do all of this. No person has the right to declare anything unlawful *(harām)* which Allāh had declared lawful *(halāl)*. In a like manner, none can declare anything lawful which is unlawful. This practice of making things lawful *(halāl)* and unlawful *(harām)* was introduced by the Polytheists (idolaters) to please their idols and Satan *(Shaytān)*. It is not permitted in the Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh to make lawful anything which is unlawful. This constitutes the adulteration of Allāh's religion.

THE RIGHT TO DECLARE ANYTHING TO BE LAWFUL *(HALĀL)* OR UNLAWFUL *(HARĀM)* IS RESERVED SOLELY FOR ALLĀH

Allāh states in Surah Mā'idah, *"O believers, do not declare those things to be unlawful (harām) which Allāh had made lawful (halāl); and do not transgress the limits, for indeed Allāh does not like the transgressors.'* [*verse 87*]

Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, vowed never to drink honey. Allāh revealed the following verse, *"O Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, why do you make something unlawful which Allāh had permitted for you?"* There are many customs prevalent today in which certain lawful things are actually believed to be unlawful. An example of this is the months of Dhul Qa'da (referred inauspicious to by many

women as 'The Month'), as well as the months of Muharram and Safar. While the Islamic laws *(Shari'ah)* has permitted marriage in these months, many people avoid getting married during these months. During the month of Muharram, some couples even abstain from sexual cohabitation. Certain nations consider marriage to widowed women to be improper, which is tantamount to calling it unlawful *(harām)*. Some people even consider it unlawful to marry the daughters of maternal and paternal uncles and aunts. All these are transgressions of the limits set by Allāh.

Just as it is prohibited to make lawful *(halāl)* things unlawful *(harām)*, so too is it prohibited to make unlawful *(harām)* things lawful *(halāl)*. The specification of unlawful *(harām)* and lawful *(halāl)* is the sole right of Allāh which He makes evident either in the Qur'ān, or the hadith of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in Surah Nahl (Surah 116), "With regard to the false claims made by your tongues, do not say, *'This is lawful (halāl)' and 'This is unlawful (harām),'* so as *to invent lies against Allāh. Indeed those who, invent lies against Allāh will never be successful"*

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَاءَنَا ۗ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿170﴾

(170) And when it is said to them, "Follow that which Allāh has revealed," They say, "But we wish to follow that upon which we found our forefathers." What! (Will they follow their forefathers) even though they understood but naught, neither were they rightly guided.

THE FOLLOWING OF ONE'S FOREFATHERS WHO WERE NOT RIGHTLY GUIDED IS A SOURCE OF DESTRUCTION

It was, and is still the practice of the idolaters that they wish to follow their forefathers, considering them to be sterling examples. They are not prepared to forfeit the disbelief and idolatry of their forebears even though they were given the invitation towards Islām and the proofs of the oneness of Allah *(Tauhīd)* were explained to them. They will not forsake idolatry at any price even if the evils of disbelief and idolatry be made evident before them. They always give just one reason that this: 'This was the ways and customs which our forefathers practised."

This verse quotes their statement together with its refutation by saying *"What! Even though they (their forefathers) understood but naught, neither were they rightly guided."* Because of their ignorance, their forefathers practised Polytheism *(shirk)* and invented various customs. Such people are not worthy of emulation. It is also evident that the predecessors of these people possessed no source of guidance since they had no divine book, nor did any Prophet come to them. They were in total ignorance. It will be sheer foolishness to follow such people.

If one's forefathers were rightly guided and promoted correct practices, then only would they be worthy of emulation. Reference is made to this in Surah Yusuf (*verse 38*), where Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام informed his companions in

prison, *"and Follow the creed of my forefathers Ibrahīm, Is'hāq and Ya'qūb."*

It is not permissible to follow any person in falsehood. However, the people who must be followed are those who are righteous, who practise the Dīn *(religion)* and propagate it. This is clearly stated in Surah Luqman (*verse 15*) where Allāh states, *"and follow the path of him who turn towards Me."*

وَمَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِى يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَآءً وَنِدَآءً صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْىٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿171﴾

(171) The similitude of those who disbelieve is like the person who calls something that can hear only a call and a sound. Deaf dumb and blind, they cannot understand.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE DISBELIEVERS

According to one interpretation, the verse illustrates the similitude of a person who preaches to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. It is as if this person (who preaches) calls for such animals who can hear only his voice and understand nothing that is being said. Similarly, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* merely understand that they are being spoken to, but have no idea about what is being told to them.

According to a second interpretation, an example is being elucidated of the person who is calling his animals. These animals understand nothing but can only hear a call. In short, both explanations elucidate the fact that the disbelievers, because of their ignorance, are so intent on following their forefathers that they care not to understand, nor accept the truth. In this regard they behave exactly like animals. They hear the call but pretend to be deaf Neither do they pay any heed to it, nor are they prepared to give any consideration to the matter. Like animals, they hear but fail to understand.

THE DISBELIEVER *(KĀFIR)* IS DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND

"Deaf dumb and blind, they cannot understand." The disbelievers are deaf to the truth, dumb to speak the truth and blind to follow the path of truth. They have lost their senses; as a result, they cannot understand the truth.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَـٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَـٰكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿172﴾

(172) O you who believe! Eat from the pure things which We have provided for you and show gratitude to Allāh if it is indeed Him whom you worship.

THE COMMAND TO EAT LAWFUL FOODS AND SHOW GRATITUDE

This verse also commands that lawful and pure things must be eaten.

Together with this is the instruction to be thankful. Allāh mentions that gratitude should be shown if it is Him whom you worship. This is so because no worship, being a sign of His grandeur, is complete without showing gratitude. Allāh says in Surah Saba (*verse 15*), *"Eat from the provision of your Sustainer, and be grateful to Him."*

Showing gratitude demands that one worships and obeys only Allāh and does not use His bounties for committing sins.

"From the pure things which We have provided for you. "This phrase makes inference to the fact that the wealth of others may not be utilised by theft, robbery or embezzlement. Although the wealth of a person, given to him by Allāh, may be lawful *(halāl)* and pure according to the Islamic laws *(Shari'ah)*, it is not permissible for another to use it unless he acquires it legally from the owner.

THE HARMS OF CONSUMING UNLAWFUL *(HARĀM)*

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Allāh is pure and only accepts things (wealth, words and actions) of purity." He has instructed the believers (concerning food) with the same instruction He issued to His prophets علیهم السلام. He commanded His prophets علیهم السلام, *"O messengers, eat of the pure things and perform good deeds.'* Allāh addresses the believers thus, *"O you who believe, eat of the pure things which We have provided for you ."* Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم illustrated the episode of a person who had undertaken a very long journey. His hair is dishevelled and his body is covered in dust. He raises his hands towards the heavens crying out, 'Oh my Lord, Oh my Lord!" He is supplicating to Allāh while, at the same time, his food is unlawful *(harām)*, his drink is unlawful *(harām)*, his clothing is unlawful *(harām)* and he has been sustained with unlawful *(harām)*. How can his du'ā (prayer) be accepted? [*Muslim, v.1, p.326*]

This hadith effectively illustrates the importance of consuming lawful *(halāl)* and abstaining from unlawful *(harām)*. It tells us that only the charity given of Halāl income is acceptable. The purity of Allāh dictates that only pure things are accepted in His court. The first of the two verses recited by the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم contains the command to the messengers of Allāh علیهم السلام to consume pure foods and do good deeds, while the second is directed towards the believers to eat of the pure things provided. Therefore, the same order issued to the noble prophets علیهم السلام has been given to the Believers (*Mu'minīn*).

After elucidating this point, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم narrated the example of the person who had travelled a great distance. Because of the tedious nature of his journey, his hair became dishevelled and his body, dusty. He then spreads his hands towards the heavens in supplication, calling out, "O my Lord! O my Lord!" begging for his *Prayer (duā)* to be answered. His supplication will never be accepted by Allāh since his food, drink, clothing and provisions are all of unlawful *(harām)* sources. Usually the *Prayer (duā)* of a traveller, as well as that of a person in distress, is never rejected by Allāh. This particular person, in spite of belonging to both categories, will have no audience with Allāh because of his indulgence in unlawful *(harām)*.

Nowadays, many people make *Prayer (duā)* to Allāh but it seems not to be

accepted. People complain that they have prayed with so much care, yet receive no response. Such people should examine their lives and do some introspection. Each person should ask himself how much Lawful *(halāl)* and how much Unlawful *(harām)* he consumes? Are his clothes derived from Lawful *(halāl)* or Unlawful *(harām)* income? Should any of these things be from Unlawful *(harām)* sources, they should be immediately discarded. This hadith cites the example of food and clothing only. Other items may also be classified as Unlawful *(harām)*, whether they be living quarters or any objects of ease and comfort.

SOME FORMS OF UNLAWFUL *(HARĀM)* EARNING

Bribery is extremely rife nowadays in spite of the fact that everyone knows it to be Unlawful *(harām)*. Even though it may be termed a gift or favour, it will not cease to be prohibited. Some people who are employed in some legitimate posts often accept bribes which are Unlawful *(harām)*. This ill practice even makes their salary Unlawful *(harām)* because by accepting bribes they are contradicting their terms of employment.

Interest, irrespective of the amount, remains Unlawful *(harām)* whether it is taken from a member of the public or a specific institution. This applies even if it is disguised by terming it as profit. Every type of trade entailing the perpetration of sins is considered to be Unlawful *(harām)* because sins as well as aiding their commission are both Unlawful *(harām)*. For this reason, the remuneration received for a sin and for assisting in the same are both- Unlawful *(harām)*.

The sale of Unlawful *(harām)* items is also not permitted, neither will the profits derived from it be considered Lawful *(halāl)*. Trading in intoxicants, swine, blood, carrion, pictures and statues are all unlawful. The profits accrued from all such sales are totally forbidden.

The levying of all taxes is also Unlawful *(harām)*. Therefore, employment in any post dealing with taxation is also Unlawful *(harām)*. Salaries received from such employment will also be Unlawful *(harām)*. Employment in banks and other institutions dealing with interest is also Unlawful *(harām)*, together with the salary received.

Insurance policies, whether life or property, are tantamount to gambling and are Unlawful *(harām)*. Whatever sum a person may receive in excess of the initial invested capital will be Unlawful *(harām)*. Whatever is gained through any sort of gambling (horseracing, etc) is not allowed.

The wealth earned by theft, robbery and illegal activities are also impermissible. So too is the wealth which is derived by deceiving others. Some people dupe others into believing that they are truly pious and righteous, thereby initiating a following. This homage becomes a trade, earning lucrative profits, which are all Unlawful *(harām)*.

Often, inheritances and legacies are not distributed in accordance with the laws of Shari'ah. Certain heirs take for themselves whatever they can lay their hands on. Sometimes the son of the deceased deprives his mother and sisters of their rightful shares. Since the laws of Shari'ah are not implemented, orphans are often deprived of their rightful share. To take the property of another as one's

own and utilising it is a total contradiction of the laws of Allāh and not permitted at all.

The wealth that was given reluctantly will be Unlawful *(harām)*, even though the owner, due to some intimidating factor, seemed to show silent consent. These are just a few details which are mentioned. The types of Unlawful *(harām)* income are too numerous to mention and every person should consider his own income and expenditure very carefully.

THE EVIL OF UNLAWFUL *(HARĀM)* WEALTH

Many people have the misconception that giving charity purifies ill-gotten wealth. To give charity with Unlawful *(harām)* wealth is an even greater sin. It will never be accepted since the hadith states that Allāh only accepts acts of purity. How can an action which itself is unacceptable purify the rest of the wealth? The charity thus given is unacceptable, as well as the remaining wealth. Both will be a cause of punishment in the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'The servant who earns illicit wealth and spends thereof in charity will have his charity rejected by Allāh. Whatever he spends there from will not be blessed and what he leaves behind will enter him into Hell. Verily Allāh does not annul evil with evil, but with good. One evil can never annul another." [*Ahmad, as recorded in "Mishkātul Masābīh", p. 242*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه relates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The flesh nourished on Unlawful *(harām)* will never enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. The fire of Hell is more deserving of it." (Ibid)

Another hadith states that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That body cannot enter Heaven *(Jannah)* which was nourished on Unlawful *(harām)*." (*Mishkātul Masābīh" p.243*)

In yet another hadith it is stated, "When a person purchases a garment for ten dirhams, one of which was Unlawful *(harām)*, not a single Salāh of his will be accepted as long as it is upon his body." [*Mishkātul Masābīh", p.243*]

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (173)

(173) Allāh has only forbidden for you carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and those animals which were sacrificed with the name of another besides Allāh. As for him who is driven by necessity, then (should he eat from it) neither rebelliously, nor transgressing the limits, there will be no sin upon him. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE FORBIDDEN THINGS AND THE PERSON DRIVEN BY NECESSITY

This verse discusses the prohibition of carrion, blood, pork, and all such animals which have been sacrificed in the name of someone besides Allāh. It was

customary for the pagan Arabs to consume all of these together with Lawful foods *(Halāl foods)*. The fundamental basic Unlawful foods *(Harām foods)* are mentioned here. The seeming limitation implied by the word *"only"* ("innamā") is merely relative. Besides the things mentioned here, there are many others that have been stated in other verses of the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Surah Mā'idah contains the mention of other forbidden things. Insha Allāh, all of this will be discussed in great detail in that Surah.

"As for him who is driven by necessity" This refers to the person who is starved to the point where he is in danger of losing his life, and has no Lawful food *(Halāl food)* to eat. He may, to save his life, eat just that much of Unlawful food *(Harām food)* which will sustain him. He can only eat so much as will save his life. He should not consume more than this, nor should he eat to derive satisfaction. For example, if a person is dying of starvation, it will be permissible for him to eat pork and drink wine if there is no other food available. Should he then eat and drink to his fill, thinking that he should make the most of the opportunity, he will be considered to be rebellious and a transgressor to the laws of Allāh. If the person eats to derive pleasure or exceed the necessary amount, he will be sinful.

Allāh mentions in this verse, *"there will be no sin upon him."* This implies that the permission received at this time of necessity is a form of pardon and grace. Allāh did not say that these things have been declared Lawful *(halāl)*. Even though its consumption may be said to be temporarily permissible, the prohibition still remains.

Some Muslims who go to Europe, America or Australia drink wine, eat pork and impermissible meat. When questioned, they say that they are forced to do so, taking support from the verse, *"As for him who is driven by necessity"* In reality they are very far from the definition of the person who is 'driven by necessity". In these countries also, Lawful foods *(Halāl foods)* can be procured. Fish, eggs, milk, etc are available, as well as the possibility of arranging for Lawful meat *(Halāl meat)*. To consume Unlawful food *(Harām food)* under these circumstances is absolutely not allowed. Even the person who is truly driven by necessity is only permitted to eat a meagre amount that can sustain him. These people, on the other hand, eat to their fill every day. Hence, there can be no question about the impermissibility of their action.

Some people make the absurd remark that they recite "Bismillah' ("In the name of Allāh') before eating pork. (May Allāh save us from such foolishness.) Taking the name of Allāh will not legalise a forbidden act. There exists the danger of losing one's Belief *(Imān)* in making such a statement. One should also reconsider the reason which takes a Muslim to a land where no Lawful food *(Halāl food)* is found. It is only the vile urge to acquire the paltry material gains of this world. This urge takes them to these lands and feeds them the Unlawful *(harām)*.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِى بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَلَا

يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٤﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ
وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ ﴿١٧٥﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ
الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٧٦﴾

(174) Verily those who conceal that which Allāh has revealed viz, the book, selling it for a paltry sum; these people only fill their bellies with fire. Allāh will not speak to them on the Day of Judgement, neither will He purify them. And they will receive a most painful chastisement (175) These are the ones who barter error for the price of guidance; and punishment for that of forgiveness. How ever will they endure the fire? (176) This is because verily Allāh has revealed the book with truth, and those who seek to disagree concerning the book are in clear schism.

THE PLIGHT OF THOSE WHO CHANGE THE BOOK OF ALLĀH

This verse admonishes those who conceal, adulterate and incorrectly explain the book of Allāh merely to acquire some worldly gain. In "Asbābun Nuzūl", the statement of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه is recorded where he says that this verse was revealed with regard to the leaders and scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl. They used to accept gifts from the people in exchange for passing rulings in religion. They also entertained the hope that the final Prophet would be from amongst them. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent amongst the Arabs, these people changed his description in the Torah. They substituted the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with other descriptions so that the public may not believe in him. This they did in order to preserve their dominance over the people and to continue receiving bribes from them.

In a previous verse also a warning was sounded regarding the concealing of Allāh's verses. It was repeated because the disease of concealing was very rife amongst the religious scholars of the Bani Isrā'īl. The reminder is given to them that the actions which they perpetrate for the meagre gains of this reprehensible world will only result in a most grave torment in the Hereafter. It will lead to Hell.

Those who are involved fill their bellies with the gains of this world, which will serve to fill the same with the flaming coals of Hell. In reality, they do not consume the things of this world, but the fire of Hell. They earn the anger of Allāh, who will not speak affectionately to them on the Day of judgment nor will He purify (forgive) them for their sins.

۞ لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى

ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلۡمُوفُونَ بِعَهۡدِهِمۡ إِذَا عَٰهَدُواْۖ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِي ٱلۡبَأۡسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَحِينَ ٱلۡبَأۡسِۗ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُواْۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

(177)Virtue is not that you turn your faces towards the east or west, but virtue is a person believes in Allāh, the last day, the angels, the scriptures, and the prophets عليهم السلام; who gives wealth in spite of its love to his relatives, the orphans, the destitute, travellers, beggars, and to emancipate slaves. He establishes Salāh, gives zakāh, they fulfil their promises when making them, are patient through hardship, adversity and times of war. These are the ones who have chosen the path of truth and they are the righteous ones.

THE DISCUSSION OF GOOD ACTIONS AND NOBLE QUALITIES

This verse is one of many referring to a multitude of good actions and noble qualities. In the book "Lubābun Nuqul" *(p. 23)* an extract of Musannaf Abdur Razzaq is quoted in which Sayyidina Qatāda رضى الله عنه says that the Jews used to face towards the west, while the Christians faced towards the east. They considered adherence to their respective Qiblas to be everything, refusing to accept Islām. In this regard the above verse was revealed, viz. *Virtue is not that you face towards the east or the west"* The same Sayyidina Qatādah رضى الله عنه reports that someone once asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to explain true virtue. It was then that this verse wās revealed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then called for the person and recited the verse to him.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes in his exegesis *(tafsīr)* (*v.1 p.207*) that when the Qibla was changed towards the Ka'ba, some Muslims and the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* found it difficult to accept. Allāh explained the wisdom that facing any particular direction is not a prerogative. The most important thing is the obedience of Allāh. Wherever He orders one to face, one should face in that direction. This is, in brief, the meaning of true virtue and fear of Allāh. The demand of true belief *(Imān)* is that one acts in accordance to the commands of Allāh. Therefore, whether it be towards the east or west, the actual direction is irrelevant to Allāh.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه explains the verse to mean if a person is contravening all the other laws of Allāh his Salāh will have little effect. Sayyidina Dahāk رحمة الله عليه is reported to have made the following comment. "Virtue and piety mean that one carries out the Farā'idh (obligatory acts) as they should be done."

The first of the many actions mentioned in this verse is that of Imān (belief) and certain fundamental beliefs. Belief *(Imān)* is such a thing without which no good act is accepted. The Jews and the Christians refused to believe and would only show importance to their respective Qiblas. Allāh says that true virtue is of that person who believes in Allāh, the last day, the angels, and all Allāh's books and messengers عليهم السلام. That person will be considered a Believer *(Mu'min)* who believes in all of these, without falsifying even one book or prophet عليه السلام, nor drawing differences between any of these prophets عليهم السلام. In accordance to one's Belief *(Imān)*, whatever good actions the Believer *(Mu'min)* does, whatever

wealth he will spend or words he will say, will all be considered as virtue and piety.

SPENDING FOR THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH

After elucidating the fundamental beliefs, Allāh outlines the general principles of spending wealth. It is of extreme virtue that a person, in spite of having love for his wealth, spends it on his relatives, the orphans, the needy, the travellers, beggars, and such slaves who had transacted the deal of "Mukātabah" with their masters (i.e. they secure freedom upon the payment of a stipulated sum of money.)

The phrase, *"in spite of its love"* may either refer to the love of wealth or, according to others, it refers to the love of Allāh. This would mean that they spend because of their love for Allāh. However, the first meaning includes the second because the person who spends in good causes, in spite of loving his wealth, will only do so because of his love for Allāh.

THE BEST CHARITY

Bukhari (*v.1 p.191*) reports that a person asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as to which charity earns the greatest reward. He received the reply, "'When you spend while you are still healthy, desirous of wealth, fearing poverty and aspiring for riches. Do not delay so much in spending until your last breath is pending and then you say, "So and so must receive so much, etc. (Then your giving will be of no avail since). It already belongs to so and so."

Therefore, the best time to spend in charity is when one is healthy (not on one's deathbed). At this time when one wants to spend, the soul refuses. However, one should suppress it, and still spend. The soul also frightens one to think that one will become impoverished and that attaining prosperity will be delayed. It will entice one to delay spending until one is really wealthy. The true believer takes no heed to these threats and spends. Bequeathing sums to various people at the end of one's life does not hold the same excellence since the estate already belongs to the heirs by then.

THE VIRTUE OF SPENDING ON ONE'S RELATIVES

The first recipient of one's alms, mentioned in this verse, should be one's own relatives ("Dhawil Qurba"). Tirmidhi relates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Giving alms to a poor person wins one the reward of charity, whereas giving the same to a relative will earn double the reward because it will be charity as well as fostering of family ties."

From among the relatives, those who have the greatest right are one's parents and children. The order to treat one's parents well has been mentioned on numerous occasions in the Qur'ān. The virtue of spending on one's wife and children also has great virtue. On account of one's natural instincts, people usually spend on these two groups of relatives. Through His grace and mercy Allāh did not restrict His order to these two groups only, but also included other relatives, be they close or far.

The pleasure of Allāh is of paramount importance and giving charity should

not be for pomp and glory. A person should not remind the recipient of his charity or favour. He should neither taunt nor tease him. Sayyidina Thaubān رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The most superior charity is that dinār (a form of currency) which a person spends upon his family, and that which one spends upon his companions in Jihād *(religious war)*." [*Muslim, v.l, p. 322*]

Sayyidina Abu Mas'ud رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, " When a person spends on his family with the intention of gaining reward, this action will be regarded as charity." [Bukhari v.1 p.324] In another narration it is reported that the first people to be considered when spending should be one's family. [*M:shkātul Masabīh" p. 170*]

THE VIRTUE OF SPENDING ON ORPHANS

The second recipient of charity mentioned in this verse are the orphans. An orphan is a child who, having not yet reached the age of puberty, loses his/her father. Normally, such a child is in need and should be considered for charity. Besides seeing to their expenses, they should be helped in other ways as well. Tirmidhi reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person who places his hand upon the head of an orphan, solely for the pleasure of Allāh, will receive the reward of a good deed in exchange for every single strand of hair that falls beneath his hand."

A hadith is recorded in "Bukhari', (*v.2 p.888*), that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Myself and the caretaker of an orphan will be like this in Heaven *(Jannah)*." At this point the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم joined together his index and middle fingers. Nowadays, it is not only commonplace for people not to spend on the orphans, but they actually usurp their wealth. They take away the rightful inheritance of these children, depriving them of their dues.

SPENDING ON THE POOR AND DESTITUTE

The third category mentioned is that of the destitute *(Masākīn)*. These are people who possess absolutely nothing. Many of these people never express their need to anyone, patiently enduring their pain, hunger, and thirst. There is great reward in spending on these people. Those who are in the habit of begging will get their needs fulfilled through this practice: However, one should be on the lookout for such destitute people who will not beg because of their strong sense of self honour.

"Bukhari" (*v.1, p.200*) reports the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم as having said, "A poor person is not he who goes begging from door to door, for whom one or two morsels of food or dates will suffice. The truly destitute person is the one who can find nothing for himself. None is aware of his condition so that they give alms to him, neither is he prepared to beg."

Allāh says in Surah Balad, *"For what reason does he not emerge from the abyss. What will inform you (Oh listener) what the abyss is? It is the emancipation of slaves, or the feeding of an orphaned relative, or a dust-covered destitute."* (*Verses 11 to 16*)

These verses explain the freeing of slaves and helping of orphans and destitute persons as a means of emerging from an abyss. This is due to the fact

that these things are extremely difficult on the soul.

SPENDING ON THE TRAVELLER

The Arabic word "Ibnus Sabīl" refers to a traveller. It often occurs that travellers, while on journey run short of funds or are robbed. Importance should be given to spending on such people should their condition become evident. It is not necessary for them to inform one in order for one to spend on them. However, if through some means, one finds out about their condition, one should offer help. Should a traveller who comes from a wealthy home run into dire straits while travelling, then spending on him will also reap rewards.

THE ORDER TO GIVE BEGGARS

The next recipient mentioned is the beggar. Amongst this group there are various types. Some are truly in need and should be aided. There are others regarding whom it cannot really be said if they are worthy of receiving charity, although outwardly they may seem deserving. These people may also be given charity.

THE PROHIBITION FROM ADOPTING BEGGING AS A TRADE

It is permissible for a person to beg when he does so out of necessity, to avert starvation or any other pressing need. However, it will be totally prohibited to adopt begging as a profession. Those habituated to begging intentionally continue to do so, thereby amassing large amounts of wealth. Such people should not be assisted. In this world they shamelessly pretend to be beggars and, indeed in the next world, they will truly be disgraced. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who asks of people their wealth so that he may accumulate riches is asking for smouldering coals (which he will receive in hell). So, he may ask for more or for less." [*Muslim, v.1, p.333*]

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned, "A person will continue begging of people in this world until he will arrive on the Day of Judgment without a bit of flesh upon his face."[*Bukhari v. I, p. 199*] By merely looking at his face, people will know that he was a beggar. The honour of his face will be lost there, just as it is evident in this very world.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "It is not permissible for such a person to beg who is wealthy and the person who is in good physical condition. An exception will only be made when these people are driven "to the ground" by absolute necessity (i.e. They have nothing except the bare ground), or they are involved in a debt which will debase them. The person who begs of people merely to amass wealth, will appear, on the Day of Judgment, with his face stripped of any flesh. His wealth shall be transformed into a smouldering coal of Hell *(Jahannam)* and fed to him. So if he desires, let him either ask for more or for less." [*Mishkātul Masābīh", p.163*]

Every person has been shown his responsibility. The beggar should abstain and the one being begged from should spend when the opportunity presents itself. He should not rebuke the beggar since one cannot be certain of the beggar's condition. At the same time, he should seek to give those who are truly

deserving.

Ruling: he person begging in a mosque (*Masjid*) should not be given anything.

SPENDING ON THE EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES

The final recipient mentioned in this verse are the "Riqāb". This is the plural of 'Raqaba," which literally means "a neck," referring to a slave. In his exegesis (*v.1, p. 208*), Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that this refers to the freeing of those slaves who are called "Mukātibs". These are those slaves the masters of whom have promised freedom upon the payment of an agreed sum. It is also considered an act of virtue and great reward to assist these people financially.

The commentator Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes (*v.1, p.124*) that the general application of this verse includes paying the ransom of prisoners of war, as well as the buying and subsequent freeing of slaves. (In the past, Jihād *(religious war)* used to be fought only for Allāh, according to the principles of the Shari'ah. As a result, all prisoners would become slaves. Nowadays, Jihād *(religious war)* is not waged for this noble cause, neither is it according to the rules of the Shari'ah. Therefore, no person may become the owner of another).

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF *SALĀH* AND OFFERING OF *ZAKĀH*

This injunction is stipulated after that of spending in charity. This means that it is also an act of piety to perform one's obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh and give zakāh. The obligatory nature of these two actions has been discussed earlier. Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes that first the recipients of zakāh have been enumerated, thereafter the obligation of zakāh itself is mentioned. He writes further that the possibility also exists that the recipients already mentioned are those to whom non-compulsory charity should be given. (Then zakāh is mentioned together with Salāh to specify its obligatory nature.)

THE FULFILLING OF PLEDGES

"They fulfill their promises when making them." The Shari'ah of Islām lays great emphasis on fulfilling of pledges and promises. Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that there were very few occasions when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not say in his sermons, "Be aware! That person has no Belief *(Imān)* who is not trustworthy and the one who does not fulfil his promises has no Dīn *(religion)*." [*Mishkātul Masābīh," p. 15 from 'Shu'abul Imān*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person is a genuine hypocrite in whom four traits are found. The one in whom one of these is present possesses one trait of hypocrisy until he discards it:

1. *He misappropriates something placed in his trust*
2. *He lies when ever he speaks.*
3. *He deceives when making promise.*
4. *He swears when involved in a dispute.* '[*Burkhari v.1, p.10*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There will be a flag for every deceiving person on the Day of Judgment. It will be announced that this is the flag of so and so person, by which each of them will be recognised." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.452*]

Sayyidina Abu Saīd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgment there will be a flag for every deceiving person, which will be placed in his posterior. The length of this flag will be proportionate to the deception which he perpetrated. Be aware! No deceiver can be worse than he who is a leader and deceives his subjects." [*Muslim v.2 p.83*]

Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person will not even smell the fragrance of Heaven *(Jannah)*, who, after being given the responsibility of seeing to the goodwill and well being of a nation, does not discharge this responsibility." [*Bukhari, v.2, p. 1058*]

Another tradition reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who, after having being made leader of a group, dies without having seen to their goodwill, nor addressing their grievances, will have Heaven *(Jannah)* made forbidden unto him." [*Bukhari, v.2, pg.1059*]

Those people who attain various positions in government by making false promises to the people, should think very carefully about these severe warnings when they fail to keep to their word.

Ruling: It is also incumbent to fulfil the promises made to non-believers. Should the situation arise where a pledge is made to certain people, whereafter it is feared that they may breach the pledge, it is permissible to annul it. The precondition is that they should first be informed of it. After this has been done, further steps may be taken which contravene the pledge.

Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"Should you fear a breach of trust, then cast back to them their pledge in such a way that both parties are on an equal footing. Verily Allāh does not like those who break their agreements."* [*verse 58*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person will not even get a whiff of the fragrance of Heaven *(Jannah)* who kills a person with whom he had undertaken a pledge (for the safety of his life)." [*Bukhari ,v.l, p .448*]

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE PATIENT ONES

"Are patient through hardship, adversity and times of war" These people are also included among those who are pious and Allāh fearing. Those remaining steadfast on the battlefront are also included in this group. Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"Oh you who believe, when you meet the enemy remain firm and remember Allāh in abundance, so that you may be successful."* [*verse 45*]

Allāh says in Surah Saff, *"Verily Allāh loves those who fight united in His cause as if they were a wall strengthened by molten lead."* [*verse 4*]

Allāh concludes the verse under discussion by saying, *"These are the ones who have chosen the path of truth and they are the righteous ones."* Those who have been

described possess true Belief *(Imān)* because they, together with the verbal declaration, carry out the requisites of Belief *(Imān)*. These are the people who possess true piety *(taqwa)* since they fulfill the commands of Allāh and abstain from sins.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِصَاصُ فِى ٱلْقَتْلَى ۖ ٱلْحُرُّ بِٱلْحُرِّ وَٱلْعَبْدُ بِٱلْعَبْدِ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰ
بِٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِىَ لَهُۥ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَىْءٌ فَٱتِّبَاعٌۢ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَآءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ
تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ فَمَنِ ٱعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿178﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِى
ٱلْقِصَاصِ حَيَوٰةٌ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿179﴾

(178) O you who believe! Qisās (retaliation) has been made incumbent upon you concerning the ones murdered. A freeman for a freeman, a slave for a slave and a woman for a woman. Whoever forgives his brother somewhat, should demand gracefully and payment should be with kindness. This is a concession from your Lord and a mercy. So whoever transgressors after this shall suffer a painful punishment (179.)For you in retaliation (Qisās) is life, O men of intelligence, so that you abstain.

SOME LAWS ABOUT RETALIATION *(QISĀS)* AND BLOOD MONEY *(DIYAH)*

When the life of a murderer is taken in exchange for the life of the person whom he intentionally murdered, the term used by the Qur'ān and hadith is Retaliation *(Qisās)*. Retaliation *(Qisās)* will only be taken in the case of intentional murder. The details of this are to be found in the books of Islāmic jurisprudence. The word Retaliation *(Qisās)* denotes 'likeness' and equality', since a life is taken in exchange of another life. For this reason, the ruler and the subject, the big and the small, the rich and the poor are all alike. The differences and classes found among tribes and nations have no bearing in the matter of Retaliation *(Qisās)*.

If the heirs of the murdered person, or anyone of them wish to forfeit the retaliation *(Qisās)* in favour of some monetary settlement, this is called Diyah (blood money). If someone kills another person unintentionally, then too a monetary settlement is incumbent which is also called blood money *(Diyah)*. (There are various types of unintentional murder, the detailed laws of which are discussed in Surah Nisā).

If anyone severs the limb of another, then, according to the circumstances, either equal retaliation *(Qisaas)* or blood money *(Diyah)* will apply. The blood money *(Diyah)* for limbs is referred to as "Arsh". The details of this will be discussed in Surah Mā'idah (Insha-Allāh). The verse under discussion discusses a few laws concerning the Retaliation *(Qisās)* of life.

In the book "Lubābun Nuqūl", Sayyidina Saīd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه states that during the period of ignorance, there were two warring tribes who often clashed in bloody skirmishes. Even the lives of women and children were not spared. They had not yet reached an agreement concerning the Retaliation *(Qisās)* and

blood money *(Diyah)*, when both tribes embraced Islām. The one tribe considered themselves superior to the other. They took an oath that they would never rest until the life of a freeman (from the opposing tribe) was taken in lieu of the life of one of their slaves. In a like manner, they demanded that the life of a man (from the opposite tribe) be taken in exchange of the life of one of their women. It was with regard to this that the above verse was revealed.

The verse tells us that a freeman will be killed in place of a freeman (whom he killed), while a slave in place of a slave, and a woman for a woman. It is learnt from this incident that the verse does not mean that a freeman cannot be killed for murdering a slave, nor a man's life spared for murdering a woman. A verse in Surah Mā'idah mentions, *"A soul for a soul,' i.e. every soul is equal to another.*

In his exegesis *(tafsīr)* (*v.1 pg.209*), Sayyidina Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that it was customary among the Arabs not to take the life of a man in lieu of the woman whom he murdered. A man's life was only taken in exchange of another man's life, while a woman's would only be taken in lieu of another woman. For this reason Allāh revealed the verse, *"a soul for a soul and an eye for an eye.*

RETALIATION *(QISĀS)* IS THE RIGHT OF THE HEIRS

The right to demand Retaliation *(Qisās)* in the case of intentional murder is reserved for the heirs of the murdered person. Each of the legal heirs share this right to Retaliation *(Qisās)*. However, since Retaliation *(Qisās)* is not divisible, should one of the heirs choose to forfeit his stake to this right, none of the heirs may demand Retaliation *(Qisās)*. They will all have to accept the blood money *(Diyah)* together with the one who had initially forfeited his right. If he waives his share of the blood money *(Diyah)*, then this too will be acceptable. The blood money *(Diyah)* for a single life is 100 camels. The details of this will be discussed (Insha Allāh) in Surah Nisā under the verse, *"It beholds not of a Believer (Mu'min) that he kills another Believer (Mu'min), except should it occur in error."* [*verse* 92]

If the heirs of the murderer and the murdered settle upon some monetary compromise, then retaliation *(Qisās)* will be waived. The wealth thus received will be distributed amongst the heirs in accordance to their prescribed shares of inheritance. Whatever amount is agreed upon, whether it be blood money *(Diyah)* or some other settlement, the mutual consent of both parties is required.

THE MONETARY COMPROMISE FOR RETALIATION *(QISĀS)* IS A CONCESSION AND MERCY FOR THE UMMAH OF MUHAMMAD صلى الله عليه وسلم

The life of the murderer may be spared by the substitution of a monetary compromise in place of Retaliation *(Qisās)*. The permissibility of blood money *(Diyah)* as well as any other form of monetary atonement is a concession accorded to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and a special mercy. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه says that only Retaliation *(Qisās)* was allowed for the Bani Isrā'īl. Blood money *(Diyah)* was not permissible for them.

Sayyidina Qatāda رضى الله عنه says that Allāh bestowed His special mercy upon this Ummah by allowing the blood money *(Diyah)*. It was not permissible

for any previous Ummah. Only Retaliation *(Qisās)*s was allowed for the people of the Torah (Jews). There was no question of blood money *(Diyah)* for them. On the contrary, the people of the Injīl (Christians) were ordered to pardon the murderer. Allāh has allowed all three for this Ummah viz. Retaliation *(Qisās)*, pardoning and blood money *(Diyah)*. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.210*]

When one or all the heirs pardon the murderer or agree upon the blood money *(Diyah)* or some other monetary compensation is agreed upon, then the heirs of the murdered person should demand their dues gracefully and not be harsh. This order is contained in the phrase where Allāh says, *"should demand gracefully"* It is incumbent upon the murderer that he pay the prescribed amount without delay or demand. This order is included in the verse, *"and payment should be with kindness.'* Once the matter of compensation has been decided, then the party who transgresses will have to suffer a painful punishment in the Hereafter. An example of transgression is when the murderer refuses to pay or runs away. Should the heirs of the murdered person kill the murderer after having taken the blood money *(Diyah)*, they will be deemed to be transgressors. Each of the parties transgressing will have to suffer the chastisement of Hell.

Sayyidina Abu Shurayh Khuzā'i رضی الله عنه says that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "The person who suffers any harm with regards to blood (i.e. A close relative of his is either murdered or injured), has three choices. He may either demand Retaliation *(Qisās)*, pardon the guilty or accept the blood money *(Diyah)*. Should he choose a fourth option he should be restrained. After settling for anyone of these choices, should he transgress, he will be made to suffer in Hell till eternity. [*'Mishkātul Masābīh" p.301*]

THE LIFE CONCEALED IN THE LAW OF RETALIATION *(QISĀS)*

In the practical implementation of Retaliation *(Qisās)*lies great scope for life itself This is briefly extolled in the verse, *"And for you is life in Retaliation (Qisās)"* Even though it may seem that a person loses his life in the implementation of Retaliation's *(Qisās)*, new life is inspired in the fact that through Retaliation *(Qisās)* people refrain from murder. In addition to every person restraining himself from murder, his family and tribe will have the concern that none amongst them should stoop to murder.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that the four Imāms of jurisprudence as well as the majority of Ulama are of the opinion that if several people collectively killed one person, each one of their lives will be taken in return. [*v.1, p.210*]

Sayyidina Saīd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه reports that once five or seven people murdered a man in isolation. Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه took the life of each one of them as Retaliation *(Qisās)* for the murdered person and said, "If the entire population of San'ā murdered a single person, I would take the life of each one of them in return." [*Mishkātul Masābīh", p. 302 quoting from Mālik and Bukhari from Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضی الله عنه*]

RETALIATION *(QISĀS)* IS THE EPITOME OF JUSTICE. CALLING IT INJUSTICE IS ITSELF AN UNJUST STATEMENT

Enforcing the law of Retaliation *(Qisās)* saves very many lives since people

refrain from killing each other. For this reason, Retaliation *(Qisās)* is a life-giving source. Many ignorant people refer to Retaliation *(Qisās)* as an injustice. Such people do not understand the meaning of injustice. The unjust person is he who purposely killed another without cause. Taking the life of the murderer in lieu of the murder is the epitome of justice.

Referring to it as injustice and oppression stems from ignorance and foolishness. Some people maintain that the murderer should not be killed but rather put into jail. They do not understand that this only gives the murderer more courage to continue. The murderer thinks that he will continue killing and spend but a little while in jail. Those whose very nature is to kill, rob and plunder are not in the least afraid of jails. They easily escape from such prisons.

Only people who have no value for human life will dislike Retaliation *(Qisās)*. They choose to sympathise with the murderer rather than the rest of mankind. Sunan Abu Dawūd contains the tradition stating that Retaliation *(Qisās)* will be enforced upon the person who intentionally murders another. The curse of Allāh, His angels and the entire mankind is upon that person who wishes to oppose the enforcement of Retaliation *(Qisās)*.

THE WAIVING OF RETALIATION *(QISĀS)* OR BLOOD MONEY *(DIYAH)* IS NOT THE CHOICE OF THE HEAD OF ANY STATE

A foolish law exists in many countries where the heads of states reserve the right to pardon a murderer upon his plea, merely looking at certain personal or social inferences. This is in total contradiction with the laws of Islām. It is the right of the heirs of the murdered person to demand Retaliation *(Qisās)* or to accept the blood money *(Diyah)*. No president, prime minister or king has the right to pardon the murderer, thereby annulling the right of the heirs. The head of state who does this, rebels against the law of the Qur'ān, and will be deserving of Allāh's punishment.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِن تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿180﴾ فَمَن بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَمَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
يُبَدِّلُونَهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿181﴾ فَمَنْ خَافَ مِن مُّوصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا
إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿182﴾

(180) It has been made incumbent upon you, when death presents itself before any of you, (to make) a bequest in favour of your parents and close relatives if you leave any wealth behind. This is obligatory upon those who have fear for Allāh. (181) So whosoever alters it after hearing it, then the sin rests upon those who alter. Verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing. (182) Whoever fears any partiality or sin from the testator, then reconciles between them, upon him rests no sin. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE LAWS OF THE BEQUEST

This verse issues the instruction which makes the leaving of a bequest, in favour of parents and close relatives, compulsory. When the signs of death become apparent on a person, he should make this bequest. Commentators maintain that the compulsion of this matter was abrogated after the fixed shares of the various heirs were stipulated. The shares of parents were also designated, as mentioned in the second ruku of Surah Nisā [*Surah 4, verses II and 12*].

A bequest in favour of an heir is not permissible unless all the other heirs permit it. Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd record a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that there can be no bequest in favour of an heir. The permission of the other heirs is only legitimate if it is given after the testator's death. Once their permission is acquired, the bequest will be valid. Bequeathing something in favour of any relatives besides the heirs is not only permissible, but recommended. The condition of a bequest though, is that it may not exceed a third of the estate. It is best for a person to bequeath less than a third. Should he wish to, he may go up to a maximum of one third. This third will be calculated from the wealth remaining after paying all debts.

Should the Wassiyah (Bequest) exceed one third, it may be fulfilled only with the consent of all mature heirs. Then too, this consent is to be given after the death of the testator. Any consent given during his/her lifetime will be rendered null and void. If any heir had consented during the testators lifetime, he is at liberty to ' withdraw this consent after the testator's death. Similarly, the testator himself may withdraw and cancel any previously made bequests.

The best approach is that a person continues spending in all good causes during his lifetime, together with spending freely upon his family. He should also spend on his friends, relatives, orphans and destitutes. Attention should also be given to the building of mosques *(Masjid's)* and Institutes *(Madrasahs)*, and bequeathing land for their establishment.

THE PAYMENT OF DEBTS PRECEDES THE FULFILLMENT OF A BEQUEST

The first condition of a bequest is that it be taken from that third of the wealth which remains after all debts have been paid from the estate. Anything exceeding a third will only be fulfilled if the heirs allow. They may or may not agree. For this reason it is best for one to spend in good causes while still alive. At the same time, it should not be such that a person neglects his own family. He should not be helping others while leaving his very own kith and kin in need. It should also not occur that he spends freely in all charitable causes, while his debts keep accumulating.

It could occur that a person was not able to spend in any charities before his death, then at the final hour he makes certain bequests, forgetting his debts. In this case as well it will be the debts which shall receive prior attention. If the debts are so much that they consume all the wealth, then legacies will not be fulfilled, nor will any inheritance be distributed amongst the heirs.

Ruling: In the execution of a bequest, the Farāidh *(obligatory)* will receive

precedence. Examples of these are the obligatory Hajj which he may not have performed, or zakāh which he was still owing, or Wājib Kafārāh *(compulsory atonements)* still pending. All of these will have to be paid first. If the deceased had made a bequest for anything which was not obligatory, then too these obligations *(Farāidh)* will receive precedence, even though he made mention of the non-obligatory duties before the obligatory ones.

THE BEQUEST FOR A HAJJUL BADL

As already' mentioned, the bequest will only be fulfilled after all debts have been settled, even though the bequest be with regard to any of the obligations *(Farāidh)* or compulsory *(Wājibāt)*. If the testator bequeaths that someone performs the obligatory Hajj on his behalf (called Hajjul Badl), but the funds are insufficient, then the mature heirs may consent to the balance being extracted from the estate. However, this is not binding upon them, although it will be best.

Ruling: This Hajjul Badl will be performed by a person from the same town as the deceased, as he chooses. However, should the funds fall short and the heirs are not willing to subsidise the balance, another person may be sent whose location is closer to Makkah. In this manner, the remaining funds would suffice (since transport and perhaps other expenses will be less).

IT IS NOT PERMISSIBLE TO EXECUTE A SINFUL BEQUEST

Should a person bequeath some wealth to be spent in a sinful course, it must not be executed. If he makes a legacy for something to given towards any acts of Polytheism *(shirk)* or religious innovations *(Bid'ah)* this too will be ignored. It is a binding duty upon his associates and heirs not to execute such bequests.

IT IS ALSO AN ACT OF MERIT TO LEAVE SOME WEALTH BEHIND FOR ONE'S HEIRS

It is narrated in Bukhari that Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqqās رضی الله عنه said, 'During the year of the conquest of Makkah. I fell so seriously ill that I feared I was to die. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to visit me, I told him, Oh the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. I possess much wealth but have only one daughter as an heir. Should I not bequeath all my wealth in charity?' He replied in the negative, to which I said. 'Then two thirds?' Again he replied in the negative, to which I again queried, 'Half? Once again he refused. I finally said, 'Then one third?' the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Yes, you may bequest one third, but this is also too much. Definitely, it is much better for you to leave your heirs wealthy rather that leave them destitute, having to stretch their hands out before others. Most surely, you will receive the reward for everything you spend in search of Allāh's pleasure, even if it be a morsel of food that you place in your wife's mouth."

ONE SHOULD NOT DELAY IN DRAWING UP A WILL

Living in this world, man is in constant contact with his fellow human beings. He has to give or take from everyone else, because of which various types of incumbent rights will apply. He may need to take loans, or things may be placed in his trust. Since none knows when death will overtake him, it is of great

importance that one should always have one's will ready. In this, all obligations should be recorded such as the rights owed to others like debts, trusts, etc. Personal obligations such as outstanding obligations *(Farāidh)* and compulsory *(Wājibāt)* should also be noted. In keeping this at hand, a person's successors will be able to fulfil all of these obligations should death arrive.

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضی الله عنه relates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "It is incorrect for even two nights to pass without a written testament by the side of a person from whom some rights are due.' [*Bukhari, v.1, p.382*]

Sayyidina Jābir bin Abdullāh رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, 'The person who dies after making his last will and testament will have died upon the right path, the Sunnah, piety, martyrdom and a state of forgiveness.' [*Ibn Majah, p.194*]

THE SIN OF ALTERING THE BEQUEST

Once a person has died leaving a bequest, it will be incumbent upon the heirs, appointed executors, judge, or ruler (whichever may be applicable) to fulfill the bequest according to the principles of Shari'ah. Since the testator has left the world and no longer has any choice in matters, those surviving him, who now have jurisdiction over his wealth, have to ensure that each one receives their allotted share from the bequest. No rightful recipient should be deprived.

Certain beneficiaries, like distant relatives or the poor, may not even know about their shares and will therefore not even claim it. It is only those who control the estate who are able to give or withhold, give more or less, or even conceal certain facts. The responsibility of distribution rests squarely upon their shoulders. They should keep the Hereafter before them when doing anything. No changes and alterations should be made to the legacy. Should they make any, they will be sinning and be questioned in the Hereafter. This warning is sounded in the verse, *'So whosoever alters it after hearing it, then the sin rests upon those who alter."*

Allāma Abu Bakr Jassas رحمة الله علیه writes in "Ahkāmul Qur'ān" that it is gathered from this verse that if a person dies after having left behind his will and bequest together with sufficient funds to sustain them, then he has fulfilled his responsibility. It is now the responsibility of his successors to conclude further matters. Should they be negligent in this regard, the sin will be theirs. Alteration to the original legacy is also considered to be negligence.

He writes further that if a person dies without paying the zakāh due from him, he will be sinful and considered to be of those who refuse to pay zakāh. If this person bequeathed that his zakāh be paid and his executor does not pay it, the deceased will be absolved of the sin, which will now rest with the executor (since he will be deemed to have changed the bequest). However, if there exists some injustice in the will (e.g. All the wealth or more than a third was bequeathed without the consent of the heirs), then it is compulsory that it be altered accordingly.

"Whoever fears any partiality or sin from the testator, then reconciles between them, upon him rests no sin "It frequently occurs that the testator, either

intentionally or erroneously, displays partiality towards a certain heir or relative when drawing up the will. As a result of this, injustice takes place. If any person learns of this occurrence, or of its pending occurrence, there will be no sin on him should he reconcile and rectify the situation between the testator and the beneficiaries. In the case where the testator has already left the world, the person who has authority over the estate may alter the will so that it complies with the Shari'ah. This will also not bring any sin to him and Allāh will forgive such an alteration. This person will not be regarded as *"whoever alters it"*

Commentators have described several incidents where the bequest may be unjust. Amongst these, the situation is where distant relatives are made beneficiaries while near ones are excluded. Another example is where a grandchild is allotted some wealth even though his father is to receive a share, upon the pretext that the child is not an heir. This is done so that the father of that particular child receives more than his brothers. Other examples are the bequeathing of all or more than a third of the estate. The person who advises on these unjust cases, thereby rectifying them, will not be sinful of changing a legacy.

With the specific intention of depriving their daughters or other heirs, some people, during their lifetimes, transfer their properties on the names of other heirs such as their sons. This is also a form of unjust bequest resulting in the person committing a sin. It is not permissible to "gift" something to anyone with the intention of depriving an heir.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A man or woman may live in the obedience of Allāh for sixty years but, upon their demise, they would have hurt someone by their bequest; then Hell becomes compulsory for them." After narrating this hadith Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه recited the following verse from Surah Nisā, *"after (deducting) the said bequest or debts, without harming (anyone) And that is the supreme triumph."* [*Ahmad as recorded in "Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 265*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "Allāh will sever that person's inheritance to Heaven *(Jannah)* who severs any portion of the inheritance of his heirs." [*Sunan Ibn Majah' p. 194*]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿183﴾ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَٰتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ
خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَن تَصُومُوا۟ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿184﴾

(183) O you who believe! Fasting has been ordained for you just as it was ordained for those before you, so that you may attain piety. (184) Fast for a prescribed number of days. Whoever amongst you is ill or upon a journey, then he should count the same number of days besides these to fast. Upon those who

are capable, its a redemption; the feeding of a poor person. Whoever will do a good act of his own will, then surely' this is better for him. And it is better for you that you fast, if you but knew.

THE OBLIGATION TO FAST IN RAMADHĀN AND ESSENTIAL LAWS GOVERNING FASTING

This verse announces the obligation of the Ramadhān fasts. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Islām is based upon five pillars: (1)The declaration that there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh, and Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the servant and messenger of Allāh. (2) The establishment of Salāh. (3) The payment of zakāh. (4) The performance of Hajj. and (5) To fast in Ramadhān.' [*Bukhari v.1 p.6*]

Salāh and fasting are both physical forms of worship, while zakāh involves financial strain. In Hajj, both physical and financial exertions are involved, making it both a physical and financial worship. Salāh was made obligatory *(Fardh)* in the fifth year after prophethood. This transpired in Makkah during the night of Ascension *(Mi'rāj)*. The fast in the month of Ramadhān was made obligatory *(Fardh)* in Madinah during the second year after Hijrah.

Just as Salāh and Zakāh were obligatory for the previous Ummahs, so too was fasting. This is explained in the phrase where Allāh says, *"just as it was ordained for those before you"* Therefore, fasting is nothing new, it should be practised just as the previous nations had done.

THE QUALITY OF PIETY *(TAQWA)* IS BORN OF FASTING.

"So that you may attain piety" By fasting, some degree of difficulty is experienced by the carnal self *(nafs)*, which curbs the carnal passions. Piety *(taqwa)* denotes abstaining from all types of sins, be they minor, major, hidden or apparent; The verse explains that fasting has been made obligatory to attain piety *(taqwa)*.

Man is imbued with numerous bestial inclinations and carnal desires which encourage him to commit sins. Fasting is a form of worship which curbs these animalistic inclinations, thereby decreasing the capacity to sin. The passions and desires of the fasting person are stunted. Fasting for the entire month of Ramadhān is obligatory *(Fardh)* on every sane mature Muslim. Abstaining from eating, drinking and sexual cohabitation during the day for an entire month creates a certain submission and placidity within the soul.

If a person fasts in accordance with the laws and etiquette described in the Ahādith, then a person's soul can truly be purified. The causes of most of the sins committed by man, are his tongue and private parts. Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked what will be the greatest cause for people entering Hell *(Jahannam)*. He replied, 'The tongue and the private parts." While fasting, the tongue and private parts are restricted, and therefore they are less liable to commit sins. For this reason the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentions in a hadith, "Fasting is a shield (offering protection against sins and the fire of Hell." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.254*]

Keeping the fast with its laws and etiquette will definitely make it easy for a

person to refrain from sins. If a person makes the intention to fast, abstaining from eating, drinking and conjugal relations, but does not adhere to the various etiquette (by indulging in unlawful Harām earnings and backbiting), he will be deprived of the blessings and benefits of fasting, even though he will be absolved of the obligation.

Nasa'ī records a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said "Fasting is a shield as long as one does not tear it." Another hadith reads, "Allah has no necessity for a person to leave eating and drinking when he does not abstain from false speech and sinful deeds." [*Bukhari, v.1, pg.255*]

From the above, it is understood that the fast is not complete by mere abstention from eating, drinking and conjugal relations. Fasting includes staying away from all evil and vile deeds. It is improper for a person to speak indecently while his mouth is in abstinence. For this reason the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When any one of you is fasting, he should not speak indecently, nor be rowdy. If another person swears at him or wants to involve him in a dispute, he should merely say, (without retaliating) 'I am fasting' (i.e. I do not wish to dispute)." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.255*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There are many fasting persons who (because they indulge in backbiting, illicit acts and unlawful *(harām)* deeds), achieve nothing from their fast except hunger and thirst. There are also many persons who perform Tahajjud Salāh (late night Salāh) but (because of vanity and show), achieve nothing thereby except the difficulty of staying awake." [*Mishkātul Masābīh", p. 17*

"*A prescribed number of days.*" Fasting has been ordained for a prescribed number of days only, which are not very difficult for a person to observe. Thereafter, mention is made of the special concession accorded to those who are sick or on journey. In their respective conditions, should they omit some of the fasts, they will have to fast the same number of days after Ramadhān. This making up for missed fasts is referred to as "Qadha," which will be explained in the ensuing verses (Insha Allāh).

"*Upon those who are capable is a redemption; the feeding of a poor person.*" This law applied during the early stages of Islām. A hadith is reported in "Sunan Abi Dawūd", (*v.1 p.74*) that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah he instructed the Muslims to fast for three days a month. Thereafter the fasts of Ramadhān were enforced. Since the people were not accustomed to fasting and found it difficult, the above concession was granted to those who, even in spite of possessing the ability to fast, did not have to do so if they did not wish to. They could substitute it with the feeding of a poor person for every missed fast. It was after this stage that the order was later revealed, "*Whomsoever witnesses the month (Ramadhān) should fast therein.* "This verse abrogated the concession of missing fasts for those who are capable. After this, every person was instructed to fast. Exemption was granted to the ill and travelling persons who could miss their fasts, but have to keep them later on.

THE THREE PHASES IN THE INJUNCTION OF FASTING

A lengthy hadith is reported in the "Musnad" of Imām Ahmad رحمة الله عليه

p.246) that Salāh and fasting both underwent three phases in their obligation. After concluding the three phases of Salāh, those of fasting are mentioned as follows:

1. Upon arriving in Madinah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *used to fast during three days of every month together with the fast of Āshura (the tenth of Muharram. Then Allāh revealed the following verse making the fasts of Ramadhān obligatory, "Oh you who believe, fasting has been ordained for you just as it was ordained for those before." These verses, together with making the fasts of Ramadhān incumbent, also granted the concession to people to offer expiation of feeding a poor person. This expiation was considered to suffice for fast.*

2. Thereafter Allāh revealed the subsequent verses viz. "It was in the month of Ramadhān wherein the Qur'ān was revealed" Included in these verses was the command, "Whomsoever witnesses the month (Ramadhān) should fast therein." This verse made concession for every healthy person not on journey to fast. The previous concession to offer the atonement in lieu of missed fasts was hereby repealed. This concession remained only for those who were ill or on a journey. They are allowed to miss fasts in Ramadhān and make it up later. The Fidya (expiation) for missed fasts remains only for such old people who are unable to fast.

3. The instruction existed initially that, during the nights of fasting days, a person was only permitted to eat, drink or cohabit until the time he fell asleep. If anyone fell asleep (even though the night was not yet over,), he was not allowed to indulge in any of these actions upon awakening. It once transpired that a companion of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *whose name was Sirmah* رضى الله عنه*, engaged in hard labour throughout the day while fasting. When he reached home that evening, he was so exhausted that he fell asleep after performing the Isha prayers. (Due to the fact that he had fallen asleep, he was now not permitted to eat, nor drink anything,). Subsequently, the night passed in this manner till daybreak, whereafter he fasted once again the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *noticed the extreme strain on him and inquired, 'What is the matter? I see you experiencing great difficulty. "He then related the entire episode. [Bukhari, v.1, p.256]*

It has also been narrated that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once cohabited with one of his wives after having fallen asleep. He then related the incident to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. With reference to this Allāh revealed the verse, *"Taking unto your spouses has been permitted for you during the nights of your fasts."*

Sayyidina Ibn Abi Layla رحمة الله عليه narrates that the companions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed us that when the fasts of Ramadhān were made

obligatory, it was difficult for them initially. For this reason, it was permissible for them to feed a poor person for every missed fast, even though they were capable of keeping it. Then the verse, "And that you fast, is better for you if you but knew," abrogated this concession. Every person now had to fast.

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه also recited the verse, *"a redemption, the feeding of a poor person)"* whereafter he said, *"This concession was abrogated."* It is evident from all these reports that the permission which originally existed no longer remains. It is now obligatory for all to fast, bearing whatever difficulty that may arise. The concept of expiation *(Fidya)* will, however, still apply to that person who is totally incapable of keeping the fasts.

"Whosoever does a good act of his own will, then this is better for him." This verse makes reference to the fact that, after observing the entire month of Ramadhān in fasting, it will be of extreme benefit for *a* person to fast on an optional basis after Ramadhān. Bukhari (*v.1, p.254*) reports ahadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in reply to a person's query regarding Islām that the five Salāh are obligatory. The person asked what else was due from him. The reply was that there was nothing else except what he may do, of his own will. Then he was told about the obligatory Ramadhān fasts, upon which he asked whether it was only these that were obligatory. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that it was only these, unless he fasted after them of his own will.

The general context of the verse encourages all good acts. Even if it be a single Salāh, fast or any other mandatory devotion which a person observes optionally, its reward will most definitely be awarded to him. He will be deserving of the great merits promised by Allāh, which is certainly better for him in the hereafter.

Other commentators have interpreted this verse slightly differently. They say it means that although the expiation *(Fidya)* is fulfilled by feeding a single person one meal, should a person willingly give extra, this will be better for him.

"And it is better for you that you fast, if you but knew." Allāma Abu Bakr Jassās رحمة الله عليه says that this verse refers to those people who, in the beginning, were permitted to miss their fasts in spite of being healthy and not on journey. Although they could offer the expiation *(Fidyah)*, it was best for them to fast. The blessings and spiritual benefits to be derived from fasting can never be attained through the expiation *(Fidyah)*.

He also writes that it could also refer to *"those who are capable"* as well as the travellers. Since the concession not to fast was also granted to travellers, the verse alludes to the point that it will be best for them to fast as well. Generally travellers *(Musāfirs)* are able to fast while on a journey without too much difficulty. It becomes evident that to fast on a journey is better than not fasting.

Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه then extracts even another fine point when he mentions that since the feeding of one poor person (the equivalent of half Sā approximately 1.75 kg) is a substitute for one fast, it is learnt that one fast is superior to donating half a Sā in charity. [*Ahkāmul Qur'ān, v. 1, p.180*]

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿185﴾

(185) The month of Ramadhān is the month wherein the Qur'ān was revealed as a guide for mankind; whose signs of guidance are absolutely clear, and it is a distinguisher between truth and falsehood. So whosoever amongst you witnesses this month, should fast therein, and those who are ill or upon a journey, should count the same number of days besides these to fast. Allāh desires ease for you and desires not hardship, and that you complete the period and glorify Allāh for His guiding you, and that you show gratitude.

THE QUR'ĀN WAS REVEALED IN RAMADHĀN

This verse specifies the days in which fasting is to take place. The previous verse merely stated, *"a prescribed number of days"* whereas this verse clearly defines the specific month. It is therefore obligatory for every Muslim to fast in this month.

Thereafter Allāh mentions another speciality of this month - the revelation of the Qur'ān. It is stated in Surah Qadr that this revelation took place on the night of Qadr. There exists no discrepancy between the two verse because the night of Qadr falls within the month of Ramadhān.

The question may arise that since the Qur'ān was revealed gradually over a period of 23 years, why does this verse state that it was revealed in a single month of Ramadhān. The answer is, that on the night of Qadr the entire Qur'ān was revealed at once from the *Lowhul Mahfūz* (Protected Tablet) to the sky above the earth. Here it was placed in the *Baitul Izzah.* It was from this place that it was then gradually taken, through the order of Allāh, by Jibril عليه السلام to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم over a period of 23 years. [*Tafsīr Qurtubi, v.2, p.292*]

The description of the Qur'ān thereafter given is evident to all. Allāh mentions that it is *"a guide for mankind; whose signs of guidance are absolutely clear and it is a distinguisher between truth and falsehood."*

Thereafter, Allāh states, *"So whomsoever from amongst you witnesses the month, should fast therein."* The obligation is made clear in this verse concerning the fasts, making it binding upon every sane, mature, male and female Muslim. However, it is allowed for sick people, travellers, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers to miss the fasts and to keep the Lapse *(Qadha)* after Ramadhān. Women experiencing menstruation or after-birth bleeding *(nifās)*, are also excused from fasting and observe them only upon the expiry of their condition. The various detailed rulings with regard to these situations are discussed in the Ahādīth and books of jurisprudence. Just a few will be elucidated here.

The world is continuously striving to make travel and locomotion more comfortable. With the inception of high speed aircraft, distances which normally took months to traverse, have now been shortened to no longer than a few hours. Since the development of these means, the question always arise regarding the case where a person fasted a full period of thirty days in a certain country, whereafter he flies to another country where still a few days remain before the end of Ramadhān. What is he to do during these days? In my humble opinion, since he is witnessing Ramadhān in this country, he should fast the remaining days. This is required from the general context of the verse, "So *whomsoever witnesses the month, should fast therein.*

This ruling is also evident if one considers the ruling jurists have issued with regard to the person who physically matures during Ramadhān and the woman who ceases to menstruate in Ramadhān. Both of these, although not fasting during that particular day, will not be allowed to eat or drink for the remainder of the day, due to the reverence of this month. Similarly, the person arriving at a place where Ramadhān is still not over, has to show reverence for the month. This reverence can assume two forms. Either he does not fast but refrains from eating and drinking, or he may fast. For him to fast will be in compliance with this verse, therefore he should observe the fasts. In this situation, he should make a general Niyyah (intention) for fasting.

In this way, the fast will be both Nafl *(optional)*, as well as obligation *(Fardh)* of Ramadhān. The benefit is that if Allāh regards his fasting to be obligatory in these days, his obligation will be fulfilled. If, however, it was really not necessary for him to fast during these remaining days, he would have reaped the reward of optional *(Nafl)* fasts. At the same time, he would have shown due reverence for the month of Ramadhān.

THE PERMISSION GRANTED TO THE SICK AND THE TRAVELLERS NOT TO FAST AND THE INSTRUCTION TO OBSERVE THE LAPSE *(QADHA)* THEREAFTER

In this verse, Allāh excludes the ill and the Musāfir *(traveller)* from the obligation of fasting, instructing them to make up the missed fasts afterwards. Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه in 'Ahkāmul Qur'ān' writes that Allāh, in this verse, only specified that the person should make up the exact number of days that he missed. No mention was made that these fasts have to be consecutive without a break in between. Therefore, a person may fast continuously, or with breaks between. Both ways are permitted, which is also denoted by the verse, *"Allāh desires ease for you and does not desire hardship"*[*v.1, p.208*]

Jurists have mentioned that if a person had not yet completed the Lapse *(Qadha)* of his Ramadhān fasts by the time the next Ramadhān arrives, he should fast for this subsequent Ramadhān and complete the Lapse *(Qadha)* thereafter. However, the Lapse *(Qadha)* should be observed as quickly as possible since one has no idea when death will overtake one.

Ruling: The concession granted to the ill does not apply to all sick people. It will apply only to those who will experience severe difficulty by fasting or have the strong fear of losing a limb or organ thereby. Those people may also take

advantage of this concession who anticipate the prolonging of their illness because of the fast. This anticipation should be based either upon previous experience or upon the diagnosis of an expert Muslim doctor who is known not to be a Fāsiq *(open sinner)*. This ruling is recorded in the canonical books of "Durrul Mukhtār" and "Shāmi" wherein it is also stated that the infidel *(kāfir)* doctor could intend, by such a diagnosis, to discourage one from worship.

People generally misconstrue any little illness to be an excuse not to fast, even though it is not at all harmful for them to fast. On the other hand, fasting is beneficial for certain diseases. Nevertheless, many people use the excuse of illness to avert fasting, merely relying upon the word of some doctors. The instruction of every doctor is not considered in this matter since certain doctors may be totally irreligious, while others are disbelievers. Neither do they understand the correct ruling nor the value of fasting. Some people even derive pleasure out of discouraging others from fasting. The word of a kāfir doctor will be emphatically ignored in this matter.

The sick person should decide using experience, strength of Belief *(Imān)* and the advice of such a Muslim doctor who, together with understanding the importance of fasting and relevant Islāmic rulings, also possesses the fear of Allāh.

Unfortunately, there are many people who not only miss their fasts on the pretext of illness but who do not even make them up later. Such people drag the great sin with them to their graves. In their love for mere eating and drinking, they are totally oblivious of the doomsday (Ākhirah).

The above discussion concerns those whose illnesses are temporary. They will have to make up these missed fasts at a later stage. However, some people suffer from such sicknesses that are terminal, from which they have no hope of recovery, nor of keeping the Lapse *(Qadha)*. Other people are so old that they too have lost hope of ever observing the Lapse *(Qadha)*. These people should give the expiation *(Fidyah)*. If, at some later stage, they do find the ability to fast, it will be obligatory upon them to complete the Lapse *(Qadha)*. Whatever expiation *(Fidyah)* was given up to then will be considered to be optional *(Nafl)* charity.

Just as it is not permitted for every ill person to miss the fast, so too does it apply to travellers. That traveller who intends a journey of Qasr may miss the fast if s/he does so with the intention of keeping the Lapse *(Qadha)* afterwards. This will be permissible once s/he leaves the boundary of his/her town or city, for as long as She/he is on journey. Once s/he returns home, the Lapse *(Qadha)* has to be observed.

Should the traveller *(Musāfir)* intend to stay over at a place for 15 days or more, he will cease to be a traveller *(Musāfir)*. If it is still the month of Ramadhān, it will be obligatory for him to fast while staying in this place, and he will have to perform his Salāh in full. The journey of Qasr is 48 Shar'i miles (equivalent to 88.864 km). A person who travels this distance will be deemed a traveller *(Musāfir)*, whether it be on foot, by car, bus or by plane. Such a person shall perform Qasr Salāh {i.e. Two in place of four Rakāhs obligation *(Fardh)*}, and it is permissible for him to omit the fasts.

It will not be permissible for the person travelling any distance less than this to omit their fasts. In spite of this allowance, it is still best for the traveller to fast during Ramadhān. The reason for this is that by not fasting a person will be deprived of the blessings and spiritual illumination of Ramadhān. Another is that fasting in the month of Ramadhān, when everyone else is also fasting, is much easier than fasting afterwards, when it will be extremely difficult.

Ruling: The traveller and the ailing person who happen to die in Ramadhān need not make a bequest for the expiation *(Fidyah)* to be given since they did not have any opportunity to observe the Lapse *(Qadha)*. However, had the sick person recovered, or the traveller returned home, whereafter they were able to observe the Lapse *(Qadha)*, but did not do so, then it will be compulsory for them to make a bequest for the expiation *(Fidyah)*. Once the person has left the world, his successors will, after having settled any debts, pay out his expiation *(Fidyah)* from the remaining third of his estate. For every fast missed the equivalent of Sadaqatul Fitr will have to be paid. If the deceased had not made a bequest to this effect, and his successors pay it out of their own pockets, this will also (*Insha Allāh*) be beneficial.

For example, if he missed ten fasts, then lived for a further ten days in good health (in the case of a sick person), or was at home for ten days (in the case of the traveller) he will have to make the bequest for expiation *(Fidyah)* of ten days to be given before he passes away. In the same example, should he have only lived for five days (wherein he did not keep any Lapse *(Qadha)*), it will only be necessary to make a bequest for the expiation *(Fidyah)* of five fasts. [*Durrul Mukhtar*]

THE EXCEPTION IN THE CASE OF PREGNANT AND BREASTFEEDING WOMEN

"Sunan Nasā'ī (*p. 315*) reports a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Allāh has allowed the traveller not to fast and pardoned a portion of his Salāh (he only has to perform two Rakāhs obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh). Allāh has also granted the same concession for the breastfeeding and expectant mother. They may make them up after Ramadhān."

That expectant woman who experiences tremendous difficulty while fasting, or fears for her or her child's life, may omit her fasts to make them up afterwards. Similar is the case of the breastfeeding mother who fears that her child, who only subsists on her milk may be deprived of the milk. If the child is able to subsist on another diet (such as formula milk or cereal, as is common nowadays), then it will not be permissible for the mother to miss her fasts. It should also be borne in mind that once a child reaches the age of two, She/he cannot be breastfed, therefore the question of the mother of a two year old child not fasting will not arise.

THE LAW CONCERNING WOMEN EXPERIENCING MENSTRUATION *(HAIDH)* AND AFTERBIRTH BLEEDING *(NIFĀS)*

Any woman undergoing these conditions during the month of Ramadhān should not fast even though they are capable of fasting. They must observe the

Lapse *(Qadha)* afterwards. As for their Salāh, it is completely pardoned, without the necessity for Lapse *(Qadha)*.

ALLĀH HAS PLACED EASE IN DĪN *(RELIGION)*

Allāh has not instructed man to do anything which is beyond his capability. This has been emphasised in numerous verses of the Qur'ān. In the verse under discussion, after discussing the Law regarding the ill and traveller, Allāh declares, *"Allāh desires ease for you, and does not desire hardship."*

Allāh has allowed the sick person to perform Salāh in whichever method is convenient for him, whether it be standing, sitting, lying down or even by indication. Zakāh is due only when a person possesses the equivalent of Nisāb. Then too, the zakāh will only be payable once the wealth has been in a person's possession for an entire lunar year. The stipulated amount for zakāh is also very little i.e. only one fortieth portion of the entire wealth (2.5 %).

Hajj is also not incumbent upon every person, but only on those who have the means to go to Makkah, meet the necessary expenses, return, and provide for their families during the interim period. Then too, it is only obligatory once in a lifetime. With regard to fasting, the leniency has already been discussed which is applicable to the ill, the traveller, the aged, and those women who are expecting or breast feeding. The other leniencies found in the Shari'ah are well renowned.

"And that you complete the period" With regard to this verse, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni' (*v.2 p.62*) writes that the instruction to fast upon witnessing Ramadhān, as well as the concession granted to the ill and the traveller (with the explicit order to carefully count the missed fasts), are all with a view to inculcating within man to be particular in these matters of calculation. In this way no fast, whether Lapse *(Qadha)* or not, is not missed, irrespective of whether they are kept in succession or not. (In so doing, the entire period of Ramadhān is completed)

"And glorify Allāh for His guiding you.." This means that one praises Allāh for this favour. Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رضى الله عنه says that this refers to the Takbirs that are read during the day of Eid. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه says that it refers to the saying of "Allāhu Akbar" (Allāh is the greatest) upon sighting the moon.

"And that you may show gratitude." This verse explains the reason for the leniency ordained by Allāh for those who are ill or on journey. It is a special favour of Allāh for which gratitude and appreciation ought to be shown.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿186﴾

(186) And when My bondsmen ask you about Me, verily I am close by. I answer the supplication of the caller when he summons. So they should accept My commandments and believe in Me so that they remain on the right.

THE VIRTUE OF DU'Ā *(SUPPLICATION)* AND ITS ETIQUETTE

A hadith is narrated in the tafsīr "Durrul Manthūr' (*v.l,p.194*) that a person asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Is Allāh nearby, that we may supplicate to Him silently, or is He far away so that we have to call out loudly to Him?" The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remained silent, whereafter this verse was revealed, *"And when My bondsmen ask you about Me"*

Sayyidina Atā bin Abi Rabāh رحمة الله عليه says that when the verse, *"Your Lord declares, 'Call unto Me, and I will answer your call,"* was revealed, the Sahāba رضى الله عنهم expressed the wish to know when they should supplicate. In reference to this the verse was revealed, *"And when My bondsmen ask you about Me"*

The previous verses mentioned fasting. The blessed month of Ramadhān is the ideal season for earning the hereafter *(Ākhirah)*. Much can be achieved in this month since the Devils *(Shayatīn)* are chained and the doors of Heaven *(Jannah)* are thrown wide open. At the same time, the doors of Hell are shut. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.255*]

Allāh dispatches an announcer every night who says, "Oh seeker of good, advance! Oh seeker of evil, desist!" [*Tirmidhi, v.l,p.122*] The people of Belief *(Imān)* are instinctively inclined towards good. They fast, pay special attention to their obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh, and increase their performance of optional *(Nafl)* Salāh. They also step up their remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*, recitation of Qur'ān, supplication to Allāh Supplication *(Du'ā)* and strive to spend the entire night of Qadr in devotion. During Ramadhān Supplications *(Du'ās)* are readily accepted. [*Tirmidhi" in the chapter of Du'ās*]

It is for this reason that it is appropriate to make mention of the acceptance of Supplications *(Du'ās)* during the discussion of Ramadhān. The verse says that Allāh is close by, hears all Supplications *(Du'ās)* and accepts them. Whether the Supplication *(Du'ā)* is silent or audible, He hears everything, even if it not be by the tongue but by the heart. He hears them all and answers. Allāh uses the term "answer" instead of saying He "hears" {all Supplications *(Du'ās)*}, so as to include the Supplications *(Du'ās)* of the heart as well.

Allāh says in Surah Qāf, *"Most assuredly We have treated man, We know what thoughts prevail in his soul and We are closer to him than his own jugular vein."* [*verse 16*]

Bukhari (*v.2 p.944*) quotes Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه, who narrates that once, while on a journey with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, we were ascending hill. We were saying "Allāhu Akbar" loudly, upon which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Oh people have mercy upon yourselves! You are not calling someone who is deaf nor one who is absent. You are calling unto One who is All Hearing, All Seeing."

Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily your Sustainer is modest and magnanimous. He is modest in that He shies away from returning the hands of His slaves empty when they lift their hands unto Him (in supplication)." [*Tirmidhi and Hākim*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم said, "Your Supplications *(Du'ās)* are always accepted as long as you are not hasty i.e. when you say, 'I made Supplication *(Du'ā)* but it was not accepted." [*Bukhari, v.2, p.938*]

In another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Supplications *(Du'ās)* of a person will always be accepted as long as he does not make Supplication *(Du'ā)* for something sinful or for the breaking of family ties. This (acceptance) will be on condition that he is not hasty." Someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the meaning of being hasty, to which he replied, "Hastiness is when a person says that he made Supplication *(Du'ā)* but it seems that it was not accepted. He then sits back without making further Supplication *(Du'ā)*" [*Muslim, v.2, p.352*]

A person should continuously make Supplication *(Du'ā)* with enthusiasm. His Supplication *(Du'ā)* should be heartfelt and sincere. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is nothing more virtuous in the sight of Allāh than Supplication *(Du'ā)*." Another hadith states that du'ā is the essence of worship.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in another hadith, "That person who desires that Allāh should accept his Supplication *(Du'ā)* in times of hardship and adversity should supplicate to Allāh in abundance during times of ease." Regarding the meaning of 'acceptance' the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that whenever a person supplicate to Allāh, Allāh will either grant him exactly what he has asked for, or avert a calamity from afflicting him. Allāh will do this for him as long as his Supplication *(Du'ā)* does not regard something sinful, nor the breaking of family ties. [*Tirmidhi has recorded all four Ahādīth*]

In the "Musnad" of Ahmad رحمة الله عليه, an addition is narrated to the above hadith. It says that Allāh may also store the Supplication *(Du'ā)* as a treasure for a person in the Hereafter (which will be of great benefit to him there). [*Mishkātul Masābīh", p. 196*]

People keep saying that Supplications *(Du'ā's)* are no longer accepted. In fact, there hardly exists anyone who is truly capable of making Supplication *(Du'ā)*. Firstly, a Supplication *(Du'ā)* should be heartfelt. Secondly, the person should abstain from sins, it is narrated in a hadith: "A person will have travelled a long distance, making his hair dishevelled and his body to be covered in dust. He will raise his hands supplicating, "Oh my Lord, Oh my Lord". His food is from unlawful *(harām)* sources, his drink is unlawful *(harām)* and all his nourishment is derived from unlawful *(harām)* means. How can his Supplication *(Du'ā)* be accepted?" [*Muslim, v.1 p.326*]

Tirmidhi narrates a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Supplication *(Du'ā)* is beneficial for eradicating calamities which have already befallen a person, as well as those which have not. Oh Allāh's servants, stick fast to the making of Supplication *(Du'ā)*."

Another hadith of Tirmidhi states that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Make Supplication *(Du'ā)* to Allāh in such a way that you are convinced of its acceptance. Verily Allāh does not accept the Supplication *(Du'ā)* of a negligent and careless heart."

"So they should accept my commandments so that they remain on the right path
This means that together with accepting all the commandments of Allāh, a person should also believe in all the attributes and the Being of Allāh, trusting only in Him. By doing this, a person will remain firm on guidance and will also receive further guidance from Allāh.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" makes the following comment on this verse: "They should seek Allāh's acceptance for all their Supplications *(Du'ās)* wherein they ask for Belief *(Imān)* and obedience, just as they seek His acceptance for all their Supplications *(Du'ās)* regarding their personal needs." [*v.2, p.64*]

In his exegesis *(tafsīr)* [*v.2, p.214*], Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه quotes Harawi رحمة الله عليه as saying that "the right path" refers to guidance and steadfastness. Allāma Baydawi رحمه الله عليه has also made similar comments as the above two in his exegesis *(tafsīr)*. [*v.1, p.130*]

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ ٱلصِّيَامِ ٱلرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَآئِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ
ٱللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنكُمْ ۖ فَٱلْـَٔـٰنَ
بَـٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مَا كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ
ٱلْخَيْطِ ٱلْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلصِّيَامَ إِلَى ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَـٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَـٰكِفُونَ
فِى ٱلْمَسَـٰجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ ﴿187﴾

(187) Permission has been granted for you, on the nights of the fasts, to go unto your wives. They are a garment unto you, and you are a garment unto them. Allāh knows well that you have been unfaithful unto yourselves, so He turned unto you and forgave you. So now you may cohabit with them and seek that which Allāh has ordained for you. Eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread i.e. the thread of dawn. Then complete the fasts till nightfall and do not touch your women when you are secluded in devotion I'tikāf in the Mosque (Masjid). These are the limits imposed by Allāh so stray not from them. Thus Allāh expounds His verses to man so that they attain piety.

CONCLUDING THE LAWS OF FASTING

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضی الله عنه narrates that when fasting was ordained initially, the law was that if a person fell asleep before he terminated his fast (at the time of Iftār), he was not permitted to eat for the entire night, nor the day thereafter. He could only eat again after terminating the following days fast.

It once transpired that Sayyidina Qais bin Sirma رضی الله عنه was fasting. When he arrived home that evening, he asked his wife whether there was any food to eat. She replied in the negative, adding that she will try and arrange for something to eat. Since he was engaged in hard labour all day he fell asleep

before his wife could *return.* When she arrived she expressed grief over the situation since he was now unable to eat until the following evening. Consequently, he fasted the following day without having anything to eat. When half the day had passed the incident was narrated to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whereupon the above verse was revealed, *"Permission has been granted for you, on the nights of fasts"* The Muslims were overjoyed upon this revelation, whereafter the rest of the verse was also revealed, "Eat *and drink until the white thread becomes distinct from the black thread of dawn."* [*Bukhari, v.1, p. 256*]

Just as it was prohibited to eat and drink after falling asleep, so too was cohabiting with one's spouse. This proved extremely difficult for the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم. Bukhari [*v.2, p.647*] narrates that when the fasts of Ramadhān were made obligatory, it was prohibited for any person to cohabit with his spouse after having fallen asleep. This order applied to the entire month of Ramadhān. As a result, many people were unfaithful to themselves by contravening this law of Allāh. With regard to this, Allāh revealed the following verse, *"Allāh knows well that you have been unfaithful to yourselves so He turned unto you and forgave you."*

In a narration of Abu Dawūd, it is reported that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once wished to cohabit with his wife. She informed him that she had already fallen asleep (meaning that it was prohibited for her). He thought that she was merely making an excuse, and fulfilled his desire.

In the exegesis *(tafsīr)* 'Durrul Manthūr', [*v.1, p.197*] it is narrated that one night Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه remained in the company of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for a long time. Upon arriving home he found his wife asleep. He awoke her with the intention of indulging in conjugal relations. She pointed out to him that she could not comply to his wishes since she had already fallen asleep. Thinking, that she had not really fallen asleep, he went ahead. A similar incident took place with Sayyidina Ka'ab bin Mālik رضى الله عنه. The following morning Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه related the episode to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It was on this occasion that the above verse was revealed viz. *"Allāh knows well that you have been unfaithful to yourselves."*

When a person complies to the dictates of his carnal self *(nafs)*, he appears to be faithful to his carnal self *(nafs)*. Since contravening Allāh's laws will draw His wrath upon a person, the carnal self *(nafs)* itself will be made to suffer punishment. In this way, by complying to its dictates, a person will actually be unfaithful to his himself because he is causing ultimate suffering to himself. This is an interpretation of *"unfaithful to yourselves."*

Another interpretation of the phrase *"unfaithful unto yourselves"is* that people do not submit to the bidding of their carnal self *(nafs)* (to indulge in sexual relations with one's spouse) because of the constraints of Shari'ah. Although this is a sort of betrayal of the carnal self *(nafs)*, it is in conformance to the laws of Allāh. Once the order of Allāh was issued to permit this act, unfaithfulness to the carnal self *(nafs)* ceased to exist in this regard. It now became permissible for a person to eat, drink and cohabit the entire night through. Those who may have contravened the order of Allāh previously were remorseful and forgiven by Him.

A SUBTLE DESCRIPTION OF THE HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIP

During the discussion of mutual cohabitation, an extremely subtle portrayal is given concerning the relationship between the husband and wife. Allāh says that the wife is like a garment to the husband and vice versa. The author of 'Rūhul Ma'āni' writes that this verse means that each spouse is a source of contentment and courage to the other. This has been referred to in the following verse of Surah A'rāf, *"that he may find solace in her"* [verse 189] The same is mentioned in Surah Rūm, where it is stated, *so that you may find solace in her"* [*verse 21*]

The couple have been described as garments to each other because they may embrace and cling onto each other. Another interpretation is that they offer protection to each other from sin and unchaste behaviour, just as clothing protects one from the elements. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in a hadith, that the person who gets married has completed half of his religion, now it only remains for him to fear Allāh with regard to the other half [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" from Bayhaqi*]

The author of 'Rūhul Ma'āni" writes further with regard to the first part of the verse viz. *"they (women) are a garment for you."* He says that man cannot live without women. Similarly, women can also not make do without men as pointed out by the next phrase i.e. *"and you are a garment unto them."*

THE COMMAND TO SEEK CHILDREN

"And seek that which Allāh has ordained for you." Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه says that this verse refers to the seeking of children. Therefore, one should indulge in sexual intercourse with the intention that Allāh bestows one with children. It is written in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2. p.65*) that the purpose of marriage should be the enhancement of progeny. The prime objective of marriage should not merely be the gratification of one's passions. Allāh has merely placed the passion of sex in man as a means to perpetuate the human race. This is just as He had placed the instinct of hunger in man as a means to preserve his life. The mere satisfaction of these passions is a trait of animals.

Some commentators have mentioned that since the object of sexual intercourse is the bearing of children, it would not be permissible to cohabit in any way besides the normal method. This is so because other methods are not conducive to reproduction.

THE PERMISSION TO EAT AND DRINK TILL DAWN

"Eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct for you from the black thread i.e. the thread of dawn." This verse pronounces the permission to eat up to the time of dawn during the nights of fasting. The white thread refers to the light of day, which is introduced by the break of dawn. The black thread refers to the darkness of night. This interpretation was offered by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself, as reported in" Bukhari", (*v.1 p.357*).

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates that initially only the verse "Eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct for you from the black thread,"

was revealed. The addition of *"the thread of dawn"* was not then included. Some people used to tie a white and a black thread on their legs, and continue eating until they could distinguish between the two (One should bear in mind that there was no electricity or lights in that time as we know it today. The homes were small and even once the light became bright outside, their homes remained dark. Therefore, they would eat till it was quite late.) These people understood the literal meaning of the verse. Thereafter Allāh revealed the addition of *"the thread of dawn."* It was then that they understood that it referred to the day and night. [*Bukhari. v.1. p.287*]

It is gathered from this discussion that the final time for Sehri (time to eat in the morning before the fast) is the break of dawn. Since the entire night is allowed for cohabitation, it follows that this is also permitted up to dawn. It is also understood from this that the state of Janābah (when one is in need of a bath after intercourse) does not nullify the fast.

The next part of the verse concerns the expiry time of the fast. Allāh says, *"Then complete the fast till the night."* The night begins with the setting of the sun. As soon as the sun goes down it will be time for Iftār (termination of the fast). Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, 'The time for Iftār sets in when the night approaches from the east,. the day fades away in the west and the sun disappears." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.262*]

Ruling: It is preferable to break the fast immediately upon the setting of the sun just as it is best to eat the Sehri during the last portion of the night [*Muslim, v.1, p.351*]. However the Sehri should not be delayed so much that one fears that dawn has already broken.

THE VIRTUE OF I'TIKĀF AND SOME RELATED INJUNCTIONS

"And do not cohabit with them (your wives) while you are secluded in devotion (I'tikāf) in the Mosques." Itikāf (Seclusion for mere worship) is a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and is only possible in the Mosque. The appropriate niyyah (intention) for Itikāf has to be made, without which whatever time spent in the Mosque (*Masjid*) will not be regarded as Itikāf To remain in Itikāf during the prescribed nights, will facilitate remaining awake on the night of Qadr and engaging in Ibādah (worship). In Itikāf a person's contact with Allāh's creation diminishes, by virtue of which complete attention can be focussed on Allāh alone. A person is mentally and physically engrossed in devotions, engaging the body and tongue.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would remain in Itikāf for ten days during every Ramadhān. In his final Ramadhān, he remained in Itikāf for twenty days. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.274*]

Sayyidina Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه said that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would always perform Itikāf for ten days every year. It once occurred that he was unable to perform it, so the following year he remained in Itikāf for twenty days [Abu Dawūd, v.1, p.334] It also happened that once he remained for twenty days in Itikāf during the month of Shawāl. [*Ibid.*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم

said with regard to I'tikāf "It prevents one from sins and accrues for him the reward of performing all good deeds." [*Ibn Majah, p.127*]

Whether by day or night, it is prohibited for a person in Itikāf to cohabit with his wife or even to touch her lustfully. Should he engage in intercourse with her, his Itikāf will be nullified. He may only touch her if there is no lust. Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها narrates that, while in Itikāf, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would allow her to wash his hair. Another narration mentions that she used to comb his hair. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.272*]

She also narrates that the person in Itikāf may only enter his house [leave the Mosque (Masjid)] for the purpose of relieving himself. [*Ibid.*] This refers to using the toilet. Since a person is able to eat and drink in the Mosque, he will not be permitted to leave its precincts for this purpose.

The person who remains in Itikāf and spends his nights in worship will receive the blessings and virtue of the night of Qadr. Allāh says in the Qur'ān, *"The night of Qadr is better than a thousand months."* For this reason a person should always search for this night, especially during the last odd numbered nights of Ramadhān. A thousand months is equivalent to 83 years and four months. Therefore, earning such a great reward for just a few moments toil, is indeed a great blessing. For this reason, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Only that person will be deprived of the good of this night who is a complete loser. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 173*]

Another hadith states that all the sins of that person will be forgiven, who, with full conviction in its rewards, spends the night of Qadr in optional *(Nafl)* Salāh. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.270*]

A DISCUSSION ON THE NAFL *(OPTIONAL)* FASTS

Whomsoever does any good act of his own will, then this is surely best for him." This verse encourages the performance of all optional *(Nafl)* acts, and is mentioned within the presiding discussion of fasting. The general usage of terms would include any optional action. Allāh is most benevolent and rewards every action a minimum often fold.

THE SIX FASTS AFTER EID

Sayyidina Abu Ayyūb Ansāri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who fasted during Ramadhān, then follows it up with six fasts in the month of Shawāl, will receive the reward (of fasting for the entire year. Should he do this every year he will receive the reward) of fasting for his entire lifetime." [*Muslim, v.1, p.369*]

After observing the fasts of Ramadhān, an additional six fasts will total 36 which is equivalent to 360 in the sight of Allāh (because Allāh rewards every action a minimum of ten fold). in this way, its observance every year will amount to fasting the entire year, every year; therefore one's entire lifetime. Even if Ramadhān has 29 days, Insha Allāh, Allāh will still accord the person the reward of a whole year because every Muslim would have kept the thirtieth fast had it arrived.

FASTING EVERY MONDAY AND THURSDAY

Much virtue has been narrated concerning fasting of Mondays and on Thursdays. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said. "Man's actions are presented (before Allāh) every Monday and Thursday. Therefore I like my actions to be presented while I am in the state of fasting." [*Tirmidhi, v.1, p.329*]

FASTING DURING THE DAYS OF 'BĪDH'

There is much virtue in the fasting of these days called 'Bīdh They are the 13th, 14th and 15th of every month. Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you fast three days month, then observe them on the 13th, 14th and 15th days." [*Tirmidhi. v.1, p.133*] The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also instructed the observance of the fast on these days. [*NaSa'ī, v.1, p.329*]

THE FAST OF ĀSHURA *(10TH OF MUHARRAM)*

Bukhari (*v.1 p.268*) records a hadith wherein Sayyidah Aysha رضی الله عنها says, "During the period of ignorance, the Quraish used to fast on the day of Āshura. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, he also observed this fast and instructed the companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم to do the same. When the fasts of Ramadhān became obligatory, the compulsion of the fast of Āshura no longer remained. Thereafter, whoever wished to fast on that day fasted and whoever did not wish to, did not fast."

It is learnt from this hadith that the fast of Āshura was strictly ordained even before that of Ramadhān. It was only upon the obligatory of Ramadhān that its compulsion was revoked, making it optional. In a hadith of Muslim, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I am convinced that Allāh will forgive the sins of an entire year that has passed, as well as those of an entire year still to come, in lieu of the fast of the day of Arafah (the ninth of Dhul Hijjah). I am also convinced that Allāh will forgive the sins of an entire year that has passed, for observing the fast of Āshura."

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best of fasts after the fasts of Ramadhān are those of Muharram (i.e. the first ten days of Muharram), which is Allāh's month. The best of all Salāh after the obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh is that of the night (*i.e. Tahajjud*) [Muslim, v.1, p.366]. According to Allāma Tiebi رحمة الله عليه, the fast of Muharram, mentioned in the hadith, refers to that of Āshura as well as those of this entire month.

Referring to the month of Muharram as Allāh's month is merely to indicate its auspiciousness, since every month is Allāh's. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the observance of the ninth and the tenth of Muharram fasts so as to contradict the practice of the Jews (who only fasted on the 10th). [*Tirmidhi, v.1, p.122*]

Sheikh Ibn Humām رحمة الله عليه mentions that the fast on the 10th of Muharram is preferable *(Mustahab)*, so too is it to fast a day prior (*9th*) or a day after (*11th*). To fast only on the day of Āshura (*10th*) is Makrūh (reprehensible) because it is an emulation of the practice of the Jews. [*Mirqāt*]

FASTING DURING THE FIRST TEN DAYS OF DHUL HIJJAH

The virtue of fasting during the ninth day of Muharram has already been mentioned. To fast on each of the first ten days also holds great merit. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The actions of the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah are superior than those of any other days." The companions رضی الله عنهم enquired, "Even superior to Jihād *(religious war)* in Allāh's path?" the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "Yes, even Jihād *(religious war)* in Allāh's path is not superior to the actions of these days, except that a person goes out in the path of Allāh with his life and wealth, then returns with none of these." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.132*]

The mother of the believers, Sayyidina Hafsa رضی الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would never miss the fasts of Āshura, the ten days of Dhul Hijjah (excluding the tenth), and three days every month.

LESSON: The ninth day of Dhul Hijjah is the day which all those performing Hajj proceed to Arafah. From after Zuhr up to sunset they are to be engaged in prayer *(Du'ā)*. For this reason it would be better for them not to fast on this day. Even the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did not fast on this day when he performed his Hajj. [*Bukhari" v.1, p.267." Muslim" vl.1, p.397*]

LESSON: A person will be rewarded for any optional *(Nafl)* action, be it fasting, Salāh, dhikr, hajj or umrah. However, it is of paramount importance that these actions be performed in accordance with the directives and principles of the Shari'ah. There is such great merit in fasting optionally that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Allāh will place such a distance between Hell (*Jahannam*) and the person who fasts in the path of Allāh (i.e. for the pleasure of Allāh), which equals the distance a person will walk in seventy years." (i.e. This person will never enter hell.)

The phrase "in the path of Allāh" would commonly refer to Jihād *(religious war)*, for which reason Imām Bukhari رحمة الله علیه included this hadith in the chapter of Jihād *(religious war)*. However, many commentators of hadith have interpreted it to mean one who fasts "for the pleasure of Allāh". Both meanings have been recorded in "Fat hul Bāri" (*v.2 p.48*). A person should continue observing optional *(Nafl)* fasts as long as it does not weaken one's ability to carry out the obligatory duties, nor the earning of lawful *(halāl)* means for one's family.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr Ibnul Ās رضی الله عنه used to fast perpetually and spend entire nights in Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم advised him saying, "Do not behave in this manner. Fast at times, and do not fast sometimes. Perform salāh at night and sleep as well. Your body, your eyes, your wife and your guests all have a right upon you. The best of fasts is that of Sayyidina Dawūd علیه السلام. He would fast a day, then skip a day (i.e. fast every alternate day)." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.265*]

FIVE DAYS IN THE YEAR WHEN FASTING IS PROHIBITED

In total there are five days every year when fasting is unlawful *(harām)*. They are the days of Eidul Fitr (*1st of Shawāl*) and the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th of Dhul Hijjah. These four days of Dhul Hijjah are called Ayāmut Tashrīq *(the days*

of Tashrīq). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that these days are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allāh. [*Muslim, v.1, p.260*]

A hadith is narrated in Bukhari (*v.1 p.267*) from Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه, as well as Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited fasting on the days of Eidul Fitr and Eidul Adha (*10th of Dhul Hijjah*). Although the remembrance *(Dhikr)* of Allāh is imperative at all times, special importance should be accorded to it on the days of Tashrīq.

Ruling: A woman whose husband is at home cannot observe optional *(Nafl)* fasts without his consent. With regard to the obligatory *(Fardh)* (Ramadhān) fasts, his consent is not required. In this case, even if he refuses she should fast, since the obligations (*Farāidh*) of Allāh supersedes everything else.

OBSERVING OPTIONAL *(NAFL)* FASTS EVERY DAY IS NOT A PRAISEWORTHY ACT

There have been many people who fast daily. This is not an act of merit since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who is always fasting has not really fasted." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.265*]

It is stated in another hadith that he has neither fasted nor has he not fasted i.e. did not make iftār [*Muslim, v.1, p.367*]. The reason is that by fasting every day the body grows accustomed to not eating. It is then as if eating times were merely adjusted.

THE BEST OF FASTS

The best of all fasts is to fast every alternate day. This was the practice of the prophet, Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that there was no fast superior to that of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام [*Muslim, v.1, p.367*]. According to another narration he said that no fast was more virtuous than this. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.765*]

THE PROHIBITION OF TRANSGRESSING THE LIMITS SET BY ALLĀH

'These are the limits imposed by Allāh, so approach them not." This order has been mentioned after the various injunctions which stipulated the obligation of fasting, the concession granted to the ill and the traveller, the beginning and terminating times of the fast, and the prohibition of the person in I'tikāf to cohabit with his wife. All of these constitute the limitations set by Allāh. These must be adhered to and may not be violated. No person should adopt any action which will serve to nulling his fast or his I'tikāf. No person is allowed to miss, nor break a fast without a valid excuse that is acceptable in the Islamic laws *(Shari'ah).*

The instruction not to even approach these restrictions point to the fact that no action must be performed which will cause the fast to be put to waste in any way. Neither should the Sehri (food taken by muslims a little before dawn during the Ramadhān) be delayed until the break of dawn, nor should the Iftār (termination of the fast) be so hastened that one eats before sunset. A fasting person must also not place anything into his mouth that may be swallowed, nor

be excessive in putting water into his nostrils while performing Wudhu (ablution). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had mentioned, "Do be thorough when putting water into your nostrils, except when you are fasting." [*Abu Dawūd*]

The use of the twig (*Miswāk*) has been established from the Ahādīth, but other methods of oral hygiene have been classified as being reprehensible when fasting because of the possibility of something entering the throat.

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوٓاْ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَتُدْلُواْ بِهَآ إِلَى ٱلْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُواْ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿188﴾

(188) Do not falsely devour the wealth of each other, taking it to the judges so that you may sinfully consume a bit of people's wealth while you are fully aware of it.

THE PROHIBITION FOR EATING THE WEALTH OF OTHERS THROUGH UNLAWFUL MEANS

This verse declares that it is forbidden to acquire the wealth of other people by unlawful means, and then utilising the same. During Ramadhān a person is not allowed to consume even lawful *(halāl)* things, so in this verse, which follows immediately after the mention of Ramadhān, he is instructed never to consume things that are unlawful *(harām)*, not during Ramadhān nor at any other time.

The clause *'falsely"* has been stipulated to exclude all legitimate means of gaining another's wealth e.g. Things that have been gifted to one, or profits earned through lawful trade, or anything acquired by legal inheritance. All these are earned lawfully and are lawful *(halāl)*. There exists numerous ways of acquiring wealth illegally, some of which have been mentioned in the discussion of the verse, *"Oh people, eat of the lawful and wholesome things of the earth"* (*Verse 168*). In this particular verse, one method is described whereby the wealth of people is usurped. This is by exploitation of the legal system, which can assume various forms.

THE WEALTH OF ANOTHER PERSON CANNOT BECOME LAWFUL BY THE VERDICT OF A MAGISTRATE

One of the methods whereby wealth is usurped by means of the legal system is when someone lays a false claim to someone's property. When the matter is referred to a court, the claimant bribes the magistrate to pronounce the Judgment in his favour.

Another method involves a person who fabricates a false document or witness by which Judgment is passed in his favour. Yet another way this is done is when certain unjust laws of a country which contravene those of Shari'ah are utilized to expropriate another's property. An example of this is the law in a certain countries which state that only sons inherit, while daughters receive nothing from the estate. Consequently, the sons of a deceased person, using this law, secure their sole shares, depriving their sisters.

Another example of this application is where the law of a country stipulates that the wealth of certain people should be forcefully expropriated and given to others. In all these situations, the wealth of the oppressed person will not be lawful *(halāl)* for the oppressor. Besides these, there are still many more examples. Those people who understand the devices of lawsuits and deception utilize these to illegally acquire the property of others.

People who acquire the wealth of others through these unjust decisions of a magistrate cannot consider their ill-gotten gains to be lawful *(halāl)*. They will suffer the grievous consequences and resultant chastisement in this world and in the Hereafter. They should not be content that they had procured this wealth through a 'legal channel. They should bear in mind that the Judge of the Last Day will hear their case.

Sayyidah Umm Salama رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'I am only human. You present your disputes before me while it is possible that some of you are more proficient in contesting your case than others. I may pass Judgment in their favour according to what is presented before me. (This verdict may be erroneous). Therefore, the person in whose favour I passed Judgment should not consider the property of his brother as being lawful for him. It will be a spark of hell which I have decreed in his favour." [*Bukhari. v.2, p.1062*]

The meaning of this hadith is that if someone presented a false case before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and was extremely proficient in its presentation, the verdict may have been issued in his favour although the property thus procured was in actual fact not his. It was thus incorrect for him to consider this property lawful, thinking it to be the decision of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

In another hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "The person who unlawfully claims the property of anothers, is not from amongst us and should prepare his abode in Hell." [*Muslim, v.1 p.57*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in another hadith, "The person who appropriates the wealth of another by means of a false oath, will meet Allāh on the Day of Judgment in such a way that Allāh's wrath will be upon them." [*Bukhari, v.2, p.987, Muslim v.1 p.80*]

"A portion of people's wealth" It is understood from this verse that not only is it prohibited to unlawfully seize the wealth of Muslims but it is equally forbidden to usurp the wealth of non-Muslims. The infidel *(kāfir)* living in a Muslim state is termed "Dhimmi". It is incumbent upon every Muslim to protect the life and property of this person. It is forbidden to expropriate his wealth in any way.

۞ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِىَ مَوَٰقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَٱلْحَجِّ ۗ وَلَيْسَ ٱلْبِرُّ بِأَن تَأْتُوا۟ ٱلْبُيُوتَ مِن ظُهُورِهَا وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَأْتُوا۟ ٱلْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَٰبِهَا ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

(189) They ask you concerning the new moon. Tell them that it is a stipulation of time for the people and the Hajj. Virtue is not that you enter your homes from the back, but virtue is of that person who possesses piety (taqwa). And enter your homes from their doors and fear Allāh so that you may be successful.

THE REASON FOR THE WAXING AND WANING OF THE MOON

The exegesis of "Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1 p.203*) narrates a hadith wherein Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal and Tha'laba bin Anamma رضى الله عنه asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "How does the waxing and the waning of the moon occur? Initially it appears to be a narrow thread whereafter it steadily grows and becomes round. Then it gradually diminishes to return to its original size. It was in reply to this question that the above verse was revealed.

This verse explains that the various phases of the moon assist man in calculating time as well as the season of Hajj. By means of this phenomenon, we determine when to fast and when women should observe their Iddah (period of seclusion after the death of a husband). Financial transactions may also be stipulated and correctly dated by means of the phases of the moon.

THE RELIANCE OF THE SHARI'AH UPON THE LUNAR CALENDAR

The Islamic laws *(Shari'ah)* of Islām relies upon the lunar calendar for its various applications. A person in possession of nisāb (the minimum wealth possessed by a person to qualify him for payment of zakāh) has to pay his zakāh upon the expiry of the lunar year. He may not pay according to the solar year because then he would be missing a year's payment every 36 years. This is due to the fact that the solar calendar is 10 days longer the lunar calendar.

A woman whose husband passes away should spend four months and ten days in Iddah. Similarly, a divorced woman who has not yet experienced menstruation (or a woman past her menopause) should observe an Iddah of three months. In each of the above cases, the Iddah is to be determined by the lunar calendar.

The fasts of Ramadhān are also calculated by the lunar calendar because Ramadhān is one of the twelve lunar months. In a like manner, Eid is also identified by the sighting of the moon. Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Begin fasting (in Ramadhān) by sighting the moon and terminate the fasts by its sighting. if you do not see the moon then complete the fasts for 30 days." [*Muslim, v.1, p.347*]

Hajj takes place on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, while the sacrificing of animals occurs on the 10th, 11th and 12th. All these dates are determined by the lunar calendar. It is for this reason that much importance should be attributed to the documenting and determining of these months. To do so is adequate obligation Fardh Kifāya (that obligation which if some members of the community do, others will be excused).

THE ADDITIONAL EASE OFFERED BY CALCULATION USING THE LUNAR CALENDAR

By using the lunar calendar in religious matters, additional ease and

simplicity are created. When the moon is sighted as a small line on the western horizon, it is realised that the month has begun. After a few days, when it illuminates throughout the night, then it is understood that this is the middle of the month. Finally when the moon wanes towards the eastern horizon, becoming unnoticed for a few nights, one gathers from this that the month is drawing to a close.

If the various forms of worship were to be determined by the solar calendar, only those with the relevant knowledge of astronomy would be able to deduce one month from another. It would then be necessary for every person to have a calendar or almanac. Besides this, everyone will then be required to remember which months have more days and which have fewer. This would prove to be too difficult for the common man. Another point to consider would be that calendars cannot be printed in every town nor can they be made available to every home.

It is simple for every person to determine the months by means of lunar phases. On the other hand, the sun rises and sets in the same manner every day and every season, making it impossible to determine the different months in this manner.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.71*) writes that this question posed by the Companions رضی الله عنهم was based upon the same question which was posed to them by the Jews. From the wording of the question, the possibility exists that they either wished to know about the wisdom behind the lunar phases or about its causes.

If their question concerned the wisdom behind the waxing and waning of the moon, then the verse offers an apt reply. Its wisdom is that people come to know of the times and appointed hours of the various acts of worship. If the moon had been unchanging like the sun, this would have been extremely difficult.

If, however their question concerned the causes behind these lunar phases, then the reply is not a direct one, but one of inner wisdom. In this case, it will mean that you should ask something of relevance to you. Knowing exactly what natural processes come into operation during these lunar cycles is of no real benefit to a person. The question that should be asked is what is the wisdom and benefits of this phenomenon. Consequently, the answer to this question of relevance is given.

With regard to the physical causes of the lunar phases, much has been recorded. Many mathematical and scientific books contain the hypotheses and theories of both the ancient philosophers as well as modern scientists. None of these theories have been confirmed by the Qur'ān or the Ahādīth, nor are they relevant to any aspect of Dīn *(religion)*.

Many people exert themselves to acquire the knowledge of astronomy and research the heavenly bodies by means of all the latest instruments. They consider themselves to be very learned, being extremely proficient in contemporary sciences. Many are even awarded honorary degrees by heads of states. All these people not only fail to worship the Creator and Owner of all

these things, but they even fail to believe in His very existence. The mode of reply used in this verse serves to admonish these kinds of people. It tells them that they are engrossed in learning about the physical causes of things, while it is necessary for them to pay attention to the great Creator of all of these causes.

THE INSTRUCTION NOT TO ENTER HOMES FROM THE BACK

After answering the question regarding the moon, reference is made to a practice prevalent during the period of ignorance. Bukhari (*v.2 p.648*) reports from Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضى الله عنه that during the period of ignorance, it was customary amongst the Arabs to enter their homes from the back whenever they intended to perform Hajj. This verse was revealed with reference to this viz. *"Virtue is not that you enter your homes from the back"*

In the chapters on Umrah (*v.1 p.242*), Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه reports that the Ansār (*the tribes of Aws and Khazraj*) would never enter their homes from the front doors after Hajj, but they would make a hole in the back wall of the house and enter from there. It once transpired that when a certain person of the Ansār entered his house from the front door after Hajj, he was taunted. It was on this occasion that this verse was revealed.

IT IS AN INNOVATION *(BID'AH)* TO ATTRIBUTE ANY SIN OR REWARD FOR AN ACTION INITIATED BY ONESELF

These people considered it an act of virtue and great reward to enter their homes from the back. However, Allāh refuted this perception of theirs, denouncing it as an act of vice and not virtue because virtue is to abstain from those acts that Allāh has forbidden. It is an act of clear deviation to contradict the laws of Allāh and then to adhere to something which one has fabricated, thinking that there are great rewards in this.

To attribute virtue to, or to consider as necessary any act that has not been ordained as such by Allāh, is innovation *(Bid'ah)*. This is a sinful act just as it is sinful to forbid any act which has been sanctioned by the Shari'ah. To enter one's home from the front door is an action that is totally permitted by the Shari'ah. Therefore, it will be sinful to consider it a vice to enter from the front door and to sanction only the breaking down of one's back wall for entry. For this reason, their incorrect belief and practice were rejected in this verse. At the end Allāh advises, *"And fear Allāh so that you may be successful"* Adhere to His commandments and do not alter them.

A DEDUCTION DRAWN BY ALLĀMA JASSĀS رحمة الله عليه

In "Ahkāmul Qur'ān" (*v.1, p.256*) Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes that the principle derived from this verse is that those actions which have not been ordained by Allāh as acts of reward and have not been encouraged by Him can never become such by the dictates of anyone. It can never be deemed a part of Dīn *(religion)* nor a means of gaining proximity to Allāh. None should hold the belief that it is a part of Dīn *(religion)* either. An example is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited total silence during the entire day, since the Shari'ah of Islām does not sanction a fast of silence. Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw

a person standing in the sun and enquired from the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم what the matter was. They replied that that person had vowed not to speak, nor to take any shade. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed him to take some shade.

وَقَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿190﴾ وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ ۚ وَٱلْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ ٱلْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُقَٰتِلُوهُمْ عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ حَتَّىٰ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ۖ فَإِن قَٰتَلُوكُمْ فَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿191﴾ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿192﴾ وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِ ۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿193﴾

(190) Fight in the path of Allāh those people who fight you, but do not transgress. Verily Allāh loves not the transgressors. (191) Slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for certainly corruption is worse than killing. Do not fight them at the sacred Mosque (Masjid) unless they fight you therein. If they fight you, then slay them as well. Such is the retribution of the disbelievers. (192) If they desist, then surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful (193) Continue fighting them until there exists no corruption and the Dīn (religion) is only for Allāh. Should they desist, then let there be no hostilities except upon the oppressors.

THE ORDER TO FIGHT IN ALLĀH'S WAY AND EMPHASIS TO ABSTAIN FROM ANY OPPRESSION AND TRANSGRESSION

During the sixth year after migration *(Hijrah)*, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, accompanied by the Companions رضى الله عنهم, left Madinah to perform Umrah. Upon approaching Makkah, they were stopped by the Infidels *(kuffār)* at a place called Hudaybiyyah. They were not allowed to enter Makkah and, after much altercation, a treaty was formulated which was to be put in effect for ten years. One of the clauses agreed upon was that the Muslims will not performed Umrah that year, but return the following year when they were only given three days to do so.

This was in the month of Dhul Qa'dah. Consequently, the following year, in the same month the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned to perform the missed Umrah. In those days, fighting was prohibited during four months of the year, Dhul Qa'dah being one of them.

A narration is recorded in 'Lubābun Nuqūl" wherein Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that the above verses were revealed when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, in the seventh year after Hijrah, proceeded to Makkah to perform the missed Umrah. The Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم were concerned that the Infidels *(kuffār)* may dishonour the treaty and not allow the Muslims entry into Makkah and that this would incite them to start a battle. They feared that since it was one of the months in which fighting was forbidden, they would

be unable to defend themselves and thus suffer defeat. It was then that Allāh revealed this above verses permitting battle.

Allāh informs the Muslims that they may fight anyone who fights against them, but with the precondition not to be being hostile, since Allāh does not like those who transgress. Everything in the Shari'ah of Islām has prescribed limits, principles and etiquette. The art of warfare also has the same. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه, commenting on the verse *"and do not transgress,"* says that that its general reference includes all things which are commonly prohibited in warfare. Examples of these are the mutilation of bodies (severing limbs and organs from the dead body, thereby disfiguring it), misappropriating the booty, killing of women, children and old people who are neither actively involved in the fighting, nor offering counsel with regard to the battle. It is also not permitted to kill monks, or burn vegetation without reason. [*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, v.1, p.266*]

A hadith of Muslim (*v.2, p.82*) reports that whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched an army, he would issue special instructions to the leader. He would tell him to fear Allāh and to be good to his subordinates. He would further instruct him to fight, in the name of Allāh, only those people who refuse to accept Allāh and not to misappropriate the booty. He should not deceive, mutilate, nor kill any child.

Some narrations report that a woman was once killed in a battle. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received intelligence of this, he issued strict instructions that no woman or child be killed. [*Muslim, v.2, p.84*]

"Slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out" This makes reference to the Polytheists forcing the Muslims to migrate from Makkah to Madinah.

SPREADING OF CORRUPTION IS WORSE THAN KILLING

"And corruption is worse than killing." In this context corruption refers to Polytheism *(shirk)*. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.75*) writes that the thought passed through the minds of the Muslims that they cannot kill the idolaters in the precincts of the Haram (sacred area around the Ka'ba where killing is prohibited) out of reverence for it. Allāh, in this verse, draws their attention to the fact that these idolaters perpetrate a much more severe crime than this within the very same unlawful *(harām)* i.e. the crime of Polytheism *(shirk)*. For this reason, the Muslim should not hesitate to fight if the occasion arises.

FIGHTING IN DEFENCE

"Do not fight them at the sacred Mosque unless they fight you therein? If they fight you, then slay them as well. Such is the retribution of the disbelievers." This verse prohibits the Muslims from initiating a fight within the precincts of the Masjidul Harām. No fight is to be started here unless the enemy themselves begin the fight. Should they choose to violate the sanctity of the Masjidul Harām, the Muslims should fight back.

"If they desist, then surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." If the polytheists desist from their polytheism and disbelief and accept Islām (there-

stopping to fight the Muslims), then Allāh will most certainly accept their penitence and forgive them.

TILL WHEN SHOULD FIGHTING CONTINUE?

"Continue fighting them until there exists no corruption and the Dīn (religion) is only for Allāh." In this verse, the necessity, object and end result of war are outlined. The worst of sins are Infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)* which constitute rebellion against Allāh, The Creator. To eradicate these, Muslims are required to wage war until there exists none of it in the world, and the only religion is that of Allāh.

In a narration of Bukhari, (*v.1, p.8*), the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have been instructed to continue fighting until people accept *'Lā Ilaha Illallāh'*. Once they have attested to this, they have secured their lives and property against me. However, should the enforcement of any law of Islām require their lives or properties, the matter rests with Allāh." (Should any person accept Islām, the Muslims would know only his verbal attestation. What his heart conceals, is a matter only known by Allāh besides Whom none can verify the condition of any person's heart.)

WHAT INTENTION IS REQUIRED FOR FIGHTING?

The verse in which the need for Jihād *(religious war)* is outlined also serves to inform the Muslims as to what intention they should possess when fighting in Allāh's way. The reason for Jihād *(religious war)* is to eradicate the world of infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*. Therefore the Muslim fighting in Jihād *(religious war)* should intend the same. He should make the intention to elevate the religion of Allāh ridding the world of all rebellion. The person who can truly be regarded as a fighter in Allāh's cause is the one who intends to elevate the word of Allāh.

Once a person came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and asked, "A person fights to acquire the spoils of war, while another fights for fame, and another to display his valour. Which of the three is considered to be fighting in the path of Allāh. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, 'The person who fights for the word of Allāh to reign supreme is in the path of Allāh." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.394*]

LESSON: With regard to the idolaters of Arabia, the law is that they either accept Islām or Jihād *(religious war)* is waged against them. Besides them, other nations have another alternative to protect their lives and wealth. This alternative is the payment of the atonement *(Jizya)*, which will allow them to live as non-Muslims in the Muslim state. The payment of atonement *(Jizya)* is mentioned in Surah Bara'ah as a means of preventing Jihād *(religious war)*. In the above verse, however, no mention of atonement *(Jizya)* is made since the verse pertains to the polytheists *(Mushriks)* of Arabia. The possibility also exists that the law of atonement *(Jizya)* was ordained some time after the revelation of the verse under discussion.

JIHĀD *(RELIGIOUS WAR)* AS A MEANS OF SUPPRESSING CORRUPTION

"And fight them until no corruption exists" This verse makes it clear that the

object of Jihād *(religious war)* is to exterminate corruption. The word corruption' is used in a very wide sense, the worst of which is infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*. Besides this, the corruption of irreligiousness and sinfulness continue to rear their ugly heads. It is often witnessed that wars occur between Muslims, where it is difficult to judge which party is in the right. Sometimes involvement in such a conflict only serves to increase the existing animosity. For this reason, the intelligent Muslim who is concerned about the Hereafter does not participate in such skirmishes.

Bukhari, [*v.2, p.648*] reports that two people came to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه during the time when battles raged between the armies of Abdullāh bin Zubair رضى الله عنه and Hajjāj bin Yusuf. Both of them said, *"People are being killed on both sides while you the son of Sayyidina Umar* رضى الله عنه *and a companion of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *take no part in it."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه replied, *"Verily Allāh has prohibited the killing of a Muslim brother. (How can I then participate in these battles when the possibility exists that I wrongfully kill a Muslim brother?)."* The two asked, *"Did Allāh not say, and fight them until there exists no corruption"? "* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه told them, 'We fought the enemies of Islām until no corruption existed and religion was only for Allāh. Now you people wish to fight until corruption is reestablished and religion remains for all except Allāh. (Therefore your fighting is not for Allāh, so how can I participate in your battles?)"

Nowadays many battles are fought. Numerous individuals and groups, claiming to defend Islām, engage in battle because of feudal reasons and because of the instigation of the enemies of Islām. As a result, the lives of Muslims are lost in great numbers. Not only is the murder of a Muslims Harām (which will cause a person much chastisement in the Hereafter) but these wars serve to strengthen the enemies of Islām, as well as weaken Islām itself. This is the very corruption which prevented Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه from participating in these fights. Every Muslim should well understand these words of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه and not place themselves on the receiving end of the punishment of this world and the Hereafter.

IT IS NOT PERMISSIBLE TO KILL THE POLYTHEIST *(MUSHRIK)* WHO ACCEPTS ISLĀM

"Should they desist, then let there be no hostilities except upon the oppressors." This verse serves to inform that in the event of an idolater accepting Islām, he cannot be killed. Should a Muslim kill him, the killer will be considered an oppressor and become deserving of punishment since this is the appropriate manner of dealing with oppressors.

Another interpretation of this verse is that if a polytheist *(Mushrik)* accepts Islām, then no hostility should be shown to him. Hostile behaviour is to be reserved for those who are truly oppressive by being adamant about their infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*.

Baydawi رحمة الله عليه in (*v.1, p.134*) of his tafsīr writes that no transgression should be shown to those who desist from infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*, since such behaviour is only appropriate for those who are indeed

oppressive. Should the Muslim behave in this manner he would become the oppressor, having the tables turned against him.

It is recorded in the book *"Ma'alimun Nuzūl"* (*v.1, p.163*) that if these people accept Islām, then they should neither be seized, nor imprisoned, nor killed. This treatment is only for those who remain firm in their Polytheism *(shirk)*.

The literal meaning of the Arabic word "Udwān" is 'to transgress or 'exceed the bounds.' (Therefore, those Polytheists who accept Islām should not be shown any behaviour that constitutes a transgression of the legal bounds.) This word is used in the verse merely to depict the behaviour which is applicable to those who choose to remain firm upon Polytheism *(shirk)*. It does not mean that this person can be treated in a manner that contradicts Islāmic legal bounds. It only means that he be given the due retribution for his transgression i.e. he may be killed in battle. This is as one commonly speaks, "If he hurts you, hurt him back," even though this is not always the correct approach. Allāh says in the Qur'ān, *"The retribution for an evil act is a similar act of evil."*

ٱلشَّهْرُ ٱلْحَرَامُ بِٱلشَّهْرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَٱلْحُرُمَٰتُ قِصَاصٌ فَمَنِ ٱعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَٱعْتَدُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا ٱعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿194﴾

(194) A sacred month for a sacred month, and things of sanctity are things of retaliation. So whoever transgresses against you, you transgress against him in the same manner as he had transgressed against you. Fear Allāh and know that verily Allāh is with those who fear Him.

THE ANSWER TO THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE POLYTHEISTS

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, in compliance to the clauses of the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, left for Makkah in the month of Dhul Qa'dah of the seventh year after Hijrah. The Muslims felt that both the sanctity of the month and place would be violated if the Polytheists did uphold the pledge and (began) to fight. With regard to the violation of the sacred place, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Do not fight them at the sacred mosque unless they fight you therein. If they fight you, then slay them as well."* Thereafter, with regard to the sacred month, Allāh revealed this verse under discussion. The verse explains that should fighting break out, a sacred month shall be in lieu of another sacred month i.e. if the Polytheists honour the month and desist from fighting, the Muslims should do likewise. However, if they violate its sanctity and initiate the fight, the Muslims should defend themselves accordingly.

"And things of sanctity are things of retaliation." This verse means that the Muslims should show regard to those who show regard to Allāh's sacred tokens. It is now evident that no uneasiness and concern should be expressed because the Being who had stipulated this sanctity (of the Masjidul Harām and the sacred months), has Himself permitted its violation under these extreme circumstances.

"So whoever transgresses against you, you transgress against him in the same manner as he had transgressed against you." This verse was also revealed on the

occasion of the completion of the missed Umrah (*umratul qadha*) when the Muslims feared an attack from the Polytheists. Even though the verse referred to a specific incident, the words are of a general nature. This outlines a universal principle that only that much can be avenged that was inflicted. The person who avenges more than this will himself be deemed an oppressor.

ALLĀH IS WITH THOSE WHO FEAR HIM

"Fear Allāh and know that Allāh is with those who fear Him." Whether avenging a wrong or in any other action, Allāh should be feared in all circumstances. A person should never venture to do anything prohibited by Allāh, since those who have fear only for Him hold an esteemed position. This position is the constant companionship of Allāh Himself When a person is tempted to indulge in any sinful act, then abstains due to the prohibition from Allāh, he will definitely receive its full reward in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

(195) Spend in the path of Allāh, and do not throw your own hands into destruction. Do things well, for a certainly Allāh loves those who do things well.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST THROWING ONESELF INTO DESTRUCTION

A hadith is narrated in the "Mustadrak' of Hākim *(v.3, p. 275)* in which Sayyidina Abu Imrān رحمة الله عليه says that they were in Constantinople when the governor of Egypt was Sayyidina Uqbah bin Āmir رضى الله عنه and the governor of Syria was Sayyidina Fudala رضى الله عنه. The Roman army prepared an extremely large saff (frontline of soldiers) while the Muslim front line soldiers were also strong in number. A Muslim penetrated deep into the Roman ranks, then returned amongst the Muslims. The other Muslims commented that he was throwing himself into destruction (referring to the verse under discussion). Sayyidina Abu Ayūb Ansari رضى الله عنه told them, "O people, you are interpreting this verse incorrectly. (It does not mean that one should not fight the enemy and not attack them.) This verse was revealed with regard to the Ansār. When Allāh granted supremacy to the Dīn *(religion)* and people began to flock into the fold of Islām, the Ansār thought that they could now remain behind to attend to their fields. Allāh rejected this decision of ours by revealing this verse, *"Spend in the path of Allāh and do not throw your own hands into destruction"* From this it was evident that destruction was to remain at home and tend to one's wealth. We thus received the order to fight in Jihād *(religious war)*."

Sayyidina Abu Ayyūb رضى الله عنه remained continuously engaged in Jihād *(religious war)* till his demise. This narration also appears in 'Tirmidhi (Chapter on Tafsīr of Surah Baqarah) with a slight variation. It reports the following addition, *"we thought that we should remain to attend to our fields and mend the losses and deficiencies which had occurred to them."* Upon this occasion, Allāh revealed this

verse, informing the Muslims that destruction lies in tending to one's wealth and neglecting Jihād *(religious war)* in Allāh's path. It is gleaned from this incident that Jihād *(religious war)* should continually be waged against the Infidels *(kuffār)*, and one's wealth should be devoted to spending in His cause. In this lies the honour and victory of Islām and the Muslims. Its omission will only lead to destruction.

THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF JIHĀD *(RELIGIOUS WAR)*

The importance of Jihād *(religious war)* can never be understated. It is a source of much honour as well as a procurer of divine aid. By means of this act Islām and the Muslims may remain victorious. In the book "Tarikhul Khulafa *(p.87)*, a narration of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه is reported from the Awsat of Tibrani. He says that Allāh inflicts an all-encompassing punishment upon the nation that neglects Jihād *(religious war)*.

Because the ummah today neglects Jihād *(religious war)* this punishment can be witnessed. Muslims are not interested in jihād *(religious war)* nowadays. They are either too engrossed in fighting amongst themselves, or fighting merely upon the instigation of the enemies of Islām In all their fights, it is merely the spark of either nationality or language that incites them. None even considers the pleasure of Allāh or the upliftment of His Dīn *(religion)* as a prerogative.

Without doubt, it is only the enemies of Islām who win. When one enemy pitches another against a Muslim country, the Muslims run to these very same instigators for assistance, accepting their rulings in all matters. In this way they fall into further devastation. No Muslim country today is prepared to act practically upon the command of Allāh to spend life and wealth in His path. Only unto Allāh do we turn and only from Him can help be aspired.

One interpretation of the verse, *"and do not throw your own hands into destruction,"* is the one tendered above from the narration of Sayyidina Abu Ayyūb Ansāri رضی الله عنه. However, commentators have mentioned many other things which could also be understood from this verse, since the words are of an unrestricted nature. These include the prohibition against wasting wealth, destroying lawfully earned wealth, committing suicide and carrying out any action, whether intentionally or not, wherein lies destruction. The lesson is also learned that by spending in those avenues considered obligatory *(Fardh)* or necessary *(Wājib)*, a person may avert destruction. Another important aspect gleaned is that one should not remain in sin without repenting, since this would entail throwing oneself into destruction. In this way, numerous other situations are prohibited by this verse since they all lead to destruction.

THE ORDER TO ADOPT THE QUALITY OF IHSĀN

"Do things well, for Allāh loves those who do things well." The word *'ahsinu'* is derived from the word *'husn'* which means something beautiful or good. Therefore *'Ihsān'* means to accomplish a task in a most beautiful and good manner. Every action should be carried out according to its conditions and etiquette. In this way, the quality of *'Ihsān'* will be found in the action.

In the "hadith of Jibril علیه السلام', when the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم asked

him concerning the meaning of *'Ihsān'*, he mentioned, *'Ihsān'* is that you worship Allāh as if you see Him before you. If you are unable to see Him, then verily He is seeing you.

The quality of Ihsān in zakāh is that vanity should not be the objective, nor should inferior wealth be given. The person being given should not be reminded of the favour while the donor should spend happily. The complete sum should be given away.

As far as Hajj is concerned, no infractions should occur neither should one engage in arguments and disputes. The object should not be for one to make a name for oneself When fasting, a person should abstain from backbiting, swearing and taunting. Each of the above are included in the meaning of Ihsān.

Although man has been permitted to slaughter animals, the quality of Ihsān should also be applied in this act as well. Sayyidina Shadād bin Aus رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily Allāh has prescribed Ihsān in everything. Whoever (*Shari'ah permitting*) kills any person, he should kill with dignity (*e.g. no mutilation should take place, neither should the face be spoilt in any way*). When you sacrifice an animal, then this too should be done with Ihsān. Sharpen your knife and calm the animal." [*Muslim, v.2,p.152*]

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۖ وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحِلَّهُ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِّن رَّأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّن صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنتُمْ

(196) Complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allāh. If you are prevented, then slaughter whatever animal is convenient for you. And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial animal has reached its place. Whoever amongst you is sick or has an ailment of the head, must pay an expiation of fasting or charity or sacrificing of an animal.

THE LAWS OF HAJJ AND UMRAH

After concluding the laws of Jihād *(religious war)*, Allāh now discusses the laws of Hajj and Umrah. Hajj is Fardh upon every person who is able to reach Makkah, bear the necessary costs of staying there and is able to leave behind with his family enough to live on. Hajj is obligatory once in a lifetime. Whoever performs Hajj more than once, does so on an optional basis. The rites of Hajj commence on the 8th of Dhul Hijjah and terminate on the 12th or 13th of Dhul Hijjah. The farewell Tawāf will only take place once the pilgrim is leaving Makkah. It will only be permitted before this on condition that it is preceded by the "Tawāfuz Ziyārah".

Since the actions of Hajj have specified days wherein they are to be performed, they cannot be done at one's convenience. Umrah, on the other hand maybe performed at any time of the year. One may perform Umrah whenever one desires since it has no fixed time. However, the jurists have declared Umrah

to be (makrūh) detestable during the days of Hajj i.e. 9th, 10th 11th , 12th and 13th of Dhul Hijjah (this is so because during these days, a person should engage in the performance of Hajj).

The performance of Umrah is Sunnah once in a lifetime. The person who is able to perform Umrah should not deprive himself of its great virtue. Donning the Ihrām and circumambulation *(Tawāf)* are the only two obligations *(Fardh)* constituents of Umrah. The Sa'ī between Safa and Marwa and the trimming or shaving of the hair (by which emerges from Ihrām) are the two necessary *(Wājib)* constituents of Umrah.

Hajj and Umrah both hold great virtue and reward. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "An Umrah followed by another serves as an expiation for all sins committed between the two. The Hajjul mabrūr (wherein no sin was committed) has only Heaven *(Jannah)* as its reward.'[*Bukhari, v.1, p.238*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "The person who performed Hajj only for Allāh, did not speak anything intimate to his spouse, nor commits any sin will return as pure as the day his mother had given birth to him." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.206*]

The reward for performing Umrah in Ramadhān is equal to that of performing Hajj [*Bukhari v.1 p.239*]. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Follow up your Hajj and Umrah (continuously perform one after the other) because both eradicate poverty and sins just as a furnace eradicates the dirt from gold, silver and steel." [*Mishkātul Masābīh*]

Those who perform Hajj always perform Umrah either before or after Hajj. However, those who perform Umrah at any time besides the days of Hajj, and then do not ever perform their obligatory *(Fardh)* Hajj will be greatly sinful. The warnings sounded for such an action are indeed very severe.

THE WARNING FOR NOT PERFORMING HAJJ

It is indeed a great sin for not performing Hajj inspite of being able to do so. It is reported in a hadith that the person who does not perform Hajj in the absence of any difficulties, sickness or oppressive rulers should die as a Jew or Christian. [*Mishkātul Masābīh, p. 222 from Dārmi*]

Hajj and Umrah cannot be performed without Ihrām. This state of Ihrām is assumed by making the relevant intention followed by recitation of the Talbiyah ("*Labbayk Allāh Humma Labbayk*"). The prohibitions and restrictions of Ihrām are the same in Hajj and Umrah. Violation of any of these will sometimes necessitate 'Damm (sacrificing a one-year old goat in the precincts of the Haram) while sometimes 'sadaqa' (equivalent to sadaqatul fitr) will have to be given.

THE PROHIBITIONS OF IHRĀM

1. *Applying perfume.*
2. *Removing any hair from the body.*

3. *Paring the nails.*

4. *Hunting.*

5. *Engaging in conjugal relations or any such action which may stir the passions.*

6. *For a man to wear any garment which defines the form of his body or of any particular limb.*

For a man to cover his head or face, or for a woman to allow any cloth to touch her face (to conceal herself from strange men, she may cover her face with a cloth which is kept slightly away from her face. Concealing herself from strangers is incumbent while in the state of Ihrām).

The penalties to be paid for violating any of the above restrictions are to be found in the books of jurisprudence *(fiqh)*. One can also refer to the authentic books on Hajj. A concession has being granted to those people who, due to illness, are forced to remove hair from their head, clip the nails, wear sewn clothing, cover their heads or faces. The details of this will soon be mentioned, Insha—Allāh.

When a person emerges from his Ihrām of Hajj or Umrah, he will have to do so by shaving or trimming the hair on his head. Removing this hair before such a time will necessitate a penalty. It is unlawful *(harām)* for women to shave their heads when emerging from the state of Ihrām. They have to trim their hair by the width of a finger. If a man trimmed a quarter of his hair on all sides by the width of a finger then this will also suffice as long as it is the correct time to terminate his Ihrām. Similarly, it will also suffice for a woman to trim her plait by the width of her finger.

THE LAWS OF "IHSĀR"

If a person who dons the Ihrām for Hajj or Umrah is prevented from proceeding by either sickness, an'enemy or animal, and thus is unable to make it to Arafāt or make the circumambulation *(Tawāf)*, be will then be called a Muhsir. This situation is termed as Ihsār,

If a Muhsir cannot wait and wishes to terminate his Ihrām, he should sacrifice a one-year old goat within the precincts of the unlawful *(harām)*. This will free him of Ihrām and its restrictions.

If he is not present in the unlawful *(harām)* then he may buy a one-year old goat or send the equivalent money to someone who will carry out the task for him. The day and time should be stipulated when the animal will be sacrificed. When the appointed time arrives and he is certain that the animal has been sacrificed, he may terminate his Ihrām. It will now be permitted for him to do the things which were prohibited while in Ihrām, without having to pay a penalty. Although he would be free from Ihrām as soon as the animal is slaughtered, it will still be best for him to shave off his hair. If the person is a Qārin" (one who performs Hajj and Umrah with a single Ihrām) he will have to slaughter two animals. Once these animals are sacrificed, then only will he be free of the Ihrām.

IT IS COMPULSORY TO COMPLETE THE HAJJ OR UMRAH AFTER ENTERING INTO THE STATE OF IHRĀM

After placing the above discussion before one, the following verse should now be given attention. *"Complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allāh'* It is gathered from this verse that once a person has entered into the state of Ihrām, he will not be able to emerge from it by merely removing the clothing or changing his intention. The Hajj or Umrah will have to be completed whether the Hajj be obligatory *(Fardh)* or optional *(Nafl)*, or the Umrah be Sunnah or optional *(Nafl)*. This will also apply to a person's own Hajj as well as the Hajjul Badl. In all these conditions, the Hajj or Umrah will have to be completed. However, should the person now be prevented from this completion by illness or an animal, etc, he will be termed a *"Muhsir"*. The details of this have been discussed above. It is to this that the verse refers, *"If you are prevented, then slaughter whatever animal is convenient for you."* This can either be done personally or by someone else.

This verse was revealed in the sixth year after Hijrah when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims were bared from entering Makkah. On this occasion, they terminated their Ihrām by sacrificing their animals. This occurred at a place called Hudaybiyyah, which is ten miles away from Makkah on the old Jeddah road. Nowadays it is called Shamsiya.

'And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial animal has reached its place.' The 'place" referred to in this verse is the Haram. While it is learned that the animal has to be sacrificed in the Haram, it is also learned that it is not permissible to shave the hair while in the state of Ihrām.

It is narrated in "Tirmidhi' that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'It is permitted for that person to emerge from Ihrām whose limb has broken or became paralysed. He will have to perform Hajj the following year." [*Tirmidhi reports from Hākim, v.l p .470*] It is gathered from this hadith that the prevented *(muhsir)* has to make up for his missed Hajj Lapse *(qadha)*.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE IHSĀR HAS TERMINATED

A person who had already carried out the formalities of Ihsār by having the animal slaughtered in the Haram, may re enter into Ihrām if the time for Hajj still remains. The Hajj now performed will be valid, and there will be no need to perform a lapse *(qadha)* Hajj the following year. (This ruling has been stated in *"Ālamgīri"*.) The lapse *(qadha)* will remain obligatory upon him should he fail to perform it in the same year.

Should the prevented *(Muhsir)* then perform the Lapse *(Qadha)* Hajj, he will have to perform an Umrah with it. If he is a Qārin, then he will also have to perform the Lapse *(Qadha)* Hajj together with an Umrah even if it is in the same year during which the Ihsār took place.

Ruling: After emerging from Ihrām, the prevented *(muhsir)* should, when performing the Lapse *(Qadha)* Hajj, either make the intention of Lapse *(Qadha)* or not. It is not incumbent on him to make the intention of Lapse *(Qadha)* whether performing it in the same year or not.

Ruling: The Lapse *(Qadha)* is compulsory *(Wājib)* upon every prevented

(muhsir), whether the Hajj was obligatory *(Fardh)*, optional *(Nafl)*, badl or not. Lapse *(Qadha)* for the prevented *(muhsir)* in the case of Umrah will also be compulsory *(Wajib)*. Only one Umrah will be due from him, which he may perform at any time. Even in the case where an Umrah is to be performed with the Hajj, only one Umrah is necessary.

THE LAW REGARDING THE PERSON WHO HAS MISSED HIS HAJJ

The prevented *(muhsir)* shall only be deemed to have missed his Hajj when, after freeing himself from Ihrām, he is unable to be at Arafāt between noon and dawn of the 9th of Dhul Hijjah in the state of Ihrām. Such a person who has now missed Hajj (either due to a legitimate reason, or without one) will need to carry out the actions of Umrah, whereafter he should shave off his hair. By doing this, he will be free of his Ihrām. Upon the next opportunity, the Lapse *(Qadha)* will have to be performed, but without an Umrah.

Ruling: Although Ihrām may be hindered by Ihsār, it cannot really be regarded as a missed Umrah. The Lapse *(Qadha)* may be performed at any time thereafter, since it is permitted throughout the year. If a person, after becoming a prevented *(muhsir)* in his Umrah, had not yet emerged from his Ihrām by sacrificing a goat, he may complete his Umrah as soon as the obstacle is removed.

COMMITTING AN INFRACTION DUE TO A VALID EXCUSE

A person is permitted to shave his hair while in Ihrām if he has a valid excuse e.g. His head is infested with lice, or he is experiencing much pain in his head. Since this action is normally not permitted in Ihrām, he will have to pay a penalty of either slaughtering a year old goat, or give in charity three sa'a of wheat to six poor people. Each poor person should receive the equivalent of half sa'a (which is the amount of sadaqatul fitr). Alternately, he may fast for three days. These alternatives apply to the wealthy as well. This is all explained in the verse, *"Whoever amongst you is sick or has an ailment of the head, must pay an expiation of fasting or charity or sacrificing of an animal."*

Sayyidina Ka'ab bin Ujrah رضى الله عنه mentions that it was because of him that this verse was revealed, since on the day of Hudaibiya the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw lice falling out of his head. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked, "Are these insects causing you grief? When he replied in the affirmative, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed him to shave off his hair.

According to another narration, he was told to either shave off his hair, fast for three days, feed six poor people or slaughter a goat. A third narration makes it clear that each poor person be given half a sa'a. All these narrations appear in Bukhari" (*v.1, p.244*). The explanation of this verse has thus been established from the Ahādīth.

Ruling: Should a person require to wear fitted clothes for the duration of an entire day or night because of severe fever or extreme heat or cold, *'Damm'* (sacrificing a goat) will become binding upon him. The same will apply should a person need to cover the head or face for an entire day or apply a fragrant

medication to any wound. However, since this infraction was due to a legitimate reason, he will have the option to choose from any of the penalties mentioned above in the case of shaving the head. If the violation was not due to a valid reason, the 'Damm' will have to be given.

Ruling: Should such a misdemeanour occur due to which only charity needs to be given as a penalty (e.g. wearing of fitted clothes for less than an entire day or night), the person has the option to feed one poor person half a sa'a of wheat instead.

فَمَن تَمَتَّعَ بِٱلْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى ٱلْحَجِّ فَمَا ٱسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ ٱلْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَٰثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِى ٱلْحَجِّ
وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۗ تِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن لَّمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُۥ حَاضِرِى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۚ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿196﴾

(196) (contd.) When you are in safety, then whosoever benefits by performing Umrah with Hajj, should slaughter whatever animal is convenient. Whoever cannot find such an animal should fast three days during the Hajj and seven upon his return home. This is a complete ten. This applies to those whose family is not present in the Masjidul Harām. Fear Allāh and know that verily Allāh is severe in punishment.

THE TAMATTU AND QIRĀN HAJJ

The Hajj of a person who adopts the Ihrām only for Hajj without performing Umrah, is termed "Ifrād'. Others may perform Umrah during the months of Hajj, then, in the same year, perform Hajj. This type of Hajj may assume two forms. In the first instance a person may don only the Ihrām for Umrah at the Mīqāt (final boundary from which the Ihrām has to be assumed). Thereafter he proceeds to complete the Umrah, terminating with the shaving or trimming of his hair. Once this has been accomplished, he waits for the 8th of Dhul Hijjah whence from Makkah he dons the Ihrām for Hajj. The Hajj is then completed as a person performing the Ifrād will do. This Hajj is termed "Tamattu."

In the second instance, a person may, from the miqāt, adopt the Ihrām of both Hajj and Umrah simultaneously. He then performs the Umrah without shaving or trimming his hair upon its completion. Thereafter he awaits the coming of Hajj which he duly performs. On the 10th of Dhul Hijjah, after pelting the largest Jamarah, he will proceed to shave or trim his hair, thereby emerging from Ihrām. This type of Hajj is termed by the jurists as 'Qirān". In this manner, Hajj is classified into three categories viz. Ifrād, Tamattu and Qirān

SACRIFICING AN ANIMAL IS COMPULSORY *(WĀJIB)* IN TAMATTU AND QIRĀN

The Mutamatti (*person performing Tamattu*) as well as the Qārin (person performing Qirān) must slaughter an animal after pelting the largest Jamara but before shaving their hair. This compulsory *(Wājib)* act is called the sacrifice of gratitude since Allāh was graceful enough to afford one the opportunity to perform two great acts. In this regard the verse reads, *"whosoever benefits by*

performing Umrah with Hajj should slaughter whatever animal is convenient."

This animal need not be slaughtered in the Haram although it is best done at Mina. It has to be done before sunset of the 12th and it will not be permissible for neither the Mutamatti nor the Qārin to shave their heads before this. The word *'tamatt'a"* in the verse, in accordance with its literal meaning will refer to both Tamattu and Qirān. For this sacrifice, a goat of at least a year will suffice, or a seventh portion of a two-year old cow; on condition that the other six shareholders also intend acts of reward.

THE SUBSTITUTION FOR THE SACRIFICE OF TAMATTU AND QIRĀN

The person who cannot secure an animal to sacrifice, may, after donning the Ihrām of Umrah, fast for three days before the 10th of Dhul Hijjah. These fasts may either be consecutive (which is preferable) or not consecutive. It is best to fast on the 7th, 8th and 9th. If , however, it is feared that fasting on the 9th will weaken one at Arafāt, the three may be completed before it. The remaining seven fasts are to be kept after the 13th, irrespective of where a person will be. These fasts also need not be consecutive, although it will be best if they are. In this manner ten fasts are completed, towards which Allāh refers in the verse, *"Whoever cannot find such an animal should fast three days during the Hajj and seven upon his return home. This is a complete ten."*

Ruling: If a person was unable to fast before the 10th, he will be left with no option but to sacrifice an animal. Should he be unable to do even this, he could shave or trim his hair on the 10th to emerge from Ihrām, then try to sacrifice before the 12th. If this becomes possible, he should merely pay the penalty for shaving or trimming before time. In the event that he can only offer the sacrifice after the 12th, three additional sacrificing *(Damms)* need to be given. One will be the sacrifice of gratitude *(Dammush Shukr)*, the other for shaving or trimming beforehand, while the third will be for delaying the sacrifice.

Ruling: The Mutamatti who takes his own animal along with him on Hajj is called a Sā'iqul Hady. Such a person may not emerge from his Ihrām after his Umrah, but will continue to perform Hajj from Makkah on the 8th like a Mufrid (*person performing Ifrād*). It will only be on the 10th, after pelting and slaughtering the animal that he will be free of his Ihrām after shaving or trimming his hair.

Ruling: The sacrifice is not compulsory *(Wājib)* on the Mufrid, but only Mustahab (preferable). Should he choose to sacrifice, it must be done after the pelting on the 10th. He is not permitted to shave or trim before the pelting. If he shaved or trimmed before the sacrifice, it would be inappropriate.

Ruling: The sacrificing *(Damm)* of Qirān or Tamattu will not substitute the usual sacrifice of the Eidul Adha (*10th*). However, this sacrifice is not compulsory upon a Traveller. It will therefore be compulsory *(Wājib)* on those people who stay in Makkah for more than 15 days before Hajj. This sacrifice, however, will not have to take place in the Haram, but a person may even instruct someone to carry it out in his home town.

'This applies to those whose family is not present in the Masjidul Harām." The

jurists have differed with regard to the inference of the word *'This.'* Some are of the opinion that it refers to *"whatever animal is convenient."* Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to combination of the two actions mentioned in the phrase, *'whosoever benefits by performing Umrah with Hajj.'* For this reason, he maintains that Tamattu and Qirān are not permissible for a person who lives in Makkah or in the Haram. These will also not be permissible for the person who was in Makkah when the month of Shawāl began since this denotes the advent of the months of Hajj. Tamattu and Qirān will only be allowed for such people if they go out of the Mīqāt when the months of Hajj commence and return thereafter.

"Fear Allāh and know that verily Allāh is severe in punishment." Since an action can only be correct once the fear of Allāh is within the heart, people are constantly reminded to fear Him. All forms of disobedience must be avoided because Allāh inflicts a severe punishment upon the disobedient ones.

ٱلْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَٰتٌ ۚ فَمَن فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ ٱلْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا
جِدَالَ فِى ٱلْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوا۟ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ ٱلزَّادِ
ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَٱتَّقُونِ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿197﴾

(197) Hajj is in the few known months. So whoever considers the Hajj compulsory upon himself should speak no word of lewdness nor commit any act of sin nor dispute. Allāh knows whatever good deed you do. Take your provisions along with you, for verily the best of provisions is abstinence. So fear Me O people of intelligence!

THE MONTHS OF HAJJ AND SOME LAWS OF HAJJ

The verse explains that there exists certain well known months which have been prescribed by Allāh for the Hajj. They are the months of Shawāl, Dhul Qa'dah, and the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah. The person who performs Umrah in these months and thereafter performs Hajj will be considered to have completed Tamattu. Upon such a person the sacrifice of gratitude *(Dammush Shukr)* will be necessary *(Wājib)*. This will not apply to the person who had performed the Umrah before these months since his will only be an individual Umrah, not Tamattu.

The person who was required to fast in place of sacrificing an animal for Tamattu or Qirān, may observe the three fasts at any time during the months of Hajj after performing his Umrah. The Ihrām donned before the months of Hajj will be valid, although doing so is reprehensible *(Makrūh)*.

When these months begin, Hajj becomes obligatory *(Fardh)* upon any person possessing the capability to perform it. He should not delay its performance, but if he makes it during any other year, it will be deemed - complete, not Lapse *(Qadha)*.

If any person cohabits with his wife before arriving in Arafāt, his Hajj will

be nullified. If he happened to kiss her with lust, he will have to pay the Damm.

THE EMPHASIS TO ABSTAIN FROM SINS DURING HAJJ

The word "Rarafath" (translated above as *'no word of lewdness")* in the verse refers to the prohibition of all those acts of intimacy which usually transpire between husband and wife. The next word *"fusūq"* denotes all acts of disobedience, whether they be normally prohibited or only in the state of Ihrām. The commonly used term 'Fāsiq' (*open sinner*) is derived from this. It is indeed lamentable that many people perform their Hajj with ill-gotten funds, while others, when performing Hajj, even omit their obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh. Some women embark on the journey for Hajj without a male escort from amongst her Mahram (*a male to whom she cannot be married*). Others engage in backbiting, while still many do not guard their eyes. All this takes place in spite of Allāh forbidding every type of 'fusūq," emphasising abstention during Hajj, even though such acts are always forbidden.

It is sad to see people engaging in all kinds of sin in spite of the fact that they are in a holy land, during holy days, wearing the garb of Ihrām and announcing the Talbiya. Thousands of people feel ashamed to shave off their hair after Hajj (which is a Sunnah of صلى الله عليه وسلم and superior to trimming it) yet they daily indulge in the very grave sin of shaving off their beards, even in Mina. In the auspicious place of Arafāt people can be seen listening to music whereas it is a place where supplication *(du'ās)* are accepted. Abstaining from all sins is a precondition for the acceptance of Hajj as mentioned in the hadith quoted under the explanation of the verse, *"Complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allāh."*

THE ORDER TO ABSTAIN FROM ARGUMENTS AND DISPUTES

The word "jidāl" means to argue and to dispute. Numerous occasions present themselves during the Hajj expedition when disputes are sure to arise, it sometimes occurs due to cramped quarters or queuing for things. It also occurs that during Hajj, people create fully fledged fights out of situations which they would have normally overlooked at home.

This is a trial and a test for man. Some Hujāj (plural of Haji) have mentioned that during Hajj, an inner stimulation to dispute is ever prevalent. The likeness is just as it transpired with the Bani Isrā'īl. They were specifically prohibited from fishing on Saturdays, days when fish would be abundant. In times of tribulation the Muslim should keep the Islamic laws *(Shari'ah)* before him and take guidance from the Qur'ān and Ahādīth.

ALLĀH IS AWARE OF EVERY GOOD ACT

"Allāh knows whatever good deed you do." During the occasion of Hajj, a person should exploit the situation to the best of his ability by exerting himself exceedingly in all virtuous acts. Whatever acts of worship he will carry out will never be wasted since Allāh is aware of every one of these, and will bestow the due rewards.

THE PROHIBITION OF BEGGING FROM THE CREATION

"Take your provisions along with you, for verily the best of provisions is abstinence." The *'abstinence"* mentioned in this verse refers to abstaining from begging of anyone. A narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه is recorded in Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p. 55*), in which he says that the people of Yemen used to leave for Hajj without taking any provisions with them. They maintained that Allāh would provide for them. However, upon reaching Makkah, they would beg from the people. It was due to this that Allāh revealed the above verse.

Since it is mostly the wealthy who go for Hajj, beggars consider the season of Hajj to be a most lucrative market for their trade. Many undertake the journey of Hajj or Umrah specifically for this purpose, spending their time at Arafāt going from tent to tent, begging of people.

A hadith is narrated in "Mishkātul Masābīh" (*p. 163*) in which Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه saw a person begging from others at Arafāt. He laid a lash upon the beggar's back and admonished him thus, "Do you ask from anyone besides Allāh on this day and in this place?"

"Fear only Me, Oh people of intelligence!" In reality only Allāh must be feared. Sins should be avoided in every act and all acts must be enacted well, as a hadith advises, "Always fear Allāh, for verily it will serve to beautify all your actions." [*Mishkātul Masābīh, v.1,p .415*]

It is reported in "Fat'hul Bāri" that during the period, of ignorance, a fair would be held on the first of Dhul Qa'dah every year at the market place of Ukāz. This would last for twenty days during which much trade took place. Thereafter, the same would take place at Majinna, lasting till the end of the month. On the first of Dhul Hijjah, the same would occur at the Marketplace of Dhul Majāz up to the 8th of the month.

It is recorded that Ukāz was situated between Tā'if and Nakhla, while Majinna was close to Marruz Zahrān, and Dhul Majāz was located at a slight distance from Arafāt. The mode of address in the verse permits trade during Hajj, but at the same time, does not encourage it in such a way as to make it a part of the Hajj rites. A person who solely intends to perform Hajj may, especially due to necessity, avail himself of the opportunity to trade. In no way should one undertake the journey solely for the purpose of trade.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.87*) writes that since much disputing generally takes place in trade (especially regarding prices), a person may wonder about the legality of trade during Hajj, because disputes have been outlawed. It is for this reason that mention is made concerning its legality. Even though trade is permitted, disputing is not.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَبْتَغُوا۟ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَآ أَفَضْتُم
مِّنْ عَرَفَـٰتٍ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عِندَ ٱلْمَشْعَرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۖ وَٱذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا
هَدَىٰكُمْ وَإِن كُنتُم مِّن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿198﴾

(198) There shall be no sin upon you should you seek your livelihood provided by Allāh. When you return from ,Arafāt, then remember Allāh at the Mash 'arul Harām. Remember Him as He had guided you, for in reality you were, before this, completely unaware.

THE SANCTIONING OF TRADE DURING HAJJ AND THE COMMAND TO REMEMBER ALLĀH AT THE MASH'ARUL HARĀM

This verse permits trade during Hajj by saying that one may seek the bounty of Allāh during Hajj. This includes all forms of commerce and labour. In "Bukhari" (*v.2, p.648*), Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه relates that Ukāz, Majinnah and Dhul Majāz were all marketplaces during the period of ignorance. After the arrival of Islām, the Muslims considered it unlawful *(harām)* to trade there during Hajj until the above verse was revealed to permit trade.

It is narrated in "Mustadrak" (*v.1, p.449*) that a person told Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه that people say his Hajj is invalid on account of his renting a conveyance during Hajj. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه asked him, "Did you not don the Ihrām, recite the Talbiya, make Tawāf, go to Arafāt and pelt the Jamarāt?" Upon replying in the affirmative, he was informed, "Your Hajj is valid. When a person presented the very same question to صلى الله عليه وسلم, he gave no reply until the verse was revealed, *There shall be no sin upon you should you seek your livelihood provided by Allāh.'* Thereafter the holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned the person, recited the verse before him and told him that his Hajj was valid."

"When you return from Arafāt, then remember Allāh at the Mash 'arul Harām." This verse instructs the Haji to proceed to Muzdalifa after leaving Arafāt. Arafāt is three miles east of Muzdalifa, and is a large plain. To be present here is one of the greatest fundamental requirements of Hajj. A person's Hajj is completed if he is able to reach this place at any time after noon on the 9th up to dawn of the 10th. After this the only remaining fundamental aspect is the Tawāfiuz Ziyārah.

At Arafāt, people engage in prayer *(du'ā)* and remmberance of Allāh *(dhikr)*, performing their Zuhr and Asr Salāhs here as well. After sunset they go back to Muzdalifa (*en route to Arafāt from Mina they will have already passed Muzdalifa*). Once here, they must perform the Maghrib and Isha Salāhs in combination. They are not allowed to perform these two Salāhs at Arafāt, nor on the road to Muzdalifa, even if the Maghrib has to be delayed till after sunset.

If anyone had performed his or her Maghrib before reaching Muzdalifa, this Salāh will have to repeated in combination with Isha. It is Sunnah to spend the night here. To remain till a little while after dawn is compulsory *(Wājib)*. It is Sunnah to remain here as long as possible until just before sunrise. Thereafter the people proceed to Mina.

The Mash'arul Harām is a mountain in Muzdalifa called Jabal Qaza. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would, after performing the Salāhs of Maghrib and Isha in unison at Muzdalifa, rest awhile. Then he would perform the Fajr Salāh immediately after dawn while it was still dark, after which he would proceed to the Mash'arul Harām. Here he would engage in prayer *(du'ā)*, Takbīr Tahlīl and

remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* until just a little while remained before sunrise, when he would leave for Mina [*Muslim, v.1, p.399*]. The entire area of Muzdalifa may be occupied, although it is best to be close to the Mash'arul Harām [*Muslim, v.1, p.400*]. Since the entire area may be occupied and the Mash'arul Harām is in Muzdalifa, some scholars have termed the entire area of Muzdalifa as the Mash'arul Harām [as recorded in "Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1 p.224*) from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amar رضى الله عنه]. A person should engage in prayer *(du'ā)* and remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* while in Muzdalifa.

"And remember Him as He had guided you." Some scholars have interpreted this verse to mean that one should remember Allāh as He had taught one. Another meaning is that He should be remembered and glorified because He had guided one (i.e. as a form of gratitude for the guidance).

"For in reality you were, before this, completely unaware." People were completely unaware of Belief *(Imān)* and obedience to Allāh. In the Hajj performed during ignorance, only forefathers were remembered. What little remembrance of Allāh did take place, was devoid of benefit in the Hereafter since it was done in infidelity *(Kufr)*.

(199) Then return to the place from where the people return and beg pardon from Allāh. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها reports that during the period of ignorance, the Quraish and all those tribes who followed them (*Banu Āmir, Banu Thaqīf, Banu Khuza'ah*) never went to Arafāt during their ritual pilgrimages. After Muzdalifa, they returned. Allāh instructed His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to stop at Arafāt as well during Hajj. The above verse was revealed to this effect. [*Bukhari, v.2, p .648*]

In the tafsīr 'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.175*), it is mentioned that the Quraish and their compatriot tribes would not go to Arafāt during Hajj. They maintained that they were the people of Allāh and residents of the sacred Haram, and could therefore not leave its boundaries. They considered it below their dignity to rub shoulders with other people in Arafāt. When all the other tribes returned from Arafāt, the Quraish would then join them en route at Muzdalifa. whence they would all return together. Allāh instructs all to go together to Arafāt and return from there.

Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was from the Quraish, they all thought he would remain with them in Muzdalifa during his farewell Hajj. However, in compliance with the command of Allāh, he proceeded with everyone to Arafāt. [*Muslim v.1 p.397*]

The Arabic word "thumma' meaning 'then' or 'thereafter' is used at the beginning of this verse. Because of this, some commentators say that this verse

actually refers to the return to Mina from Muzdalifa, because mention has already been made of the return from Arafāt. Others say that verses do not necessarily have to be chronological, but make random mention of the various Hajj rites. Yet another group maintain that the word "thumma" does not bear its original meaning in this context and (as is common in the Arabic language) it assumes the meaning of 'and'. The author of the tafsīr "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl' has mentioned all three interpretations and has apparently favoured the third. It is also possible to say that the word refers not to a practical sequence of events, but serves merely to lend sequence to the discussion.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes (*v.1 p.242*) that the verse serves to elucidate that just as Allāh has instructed the people to proceed from Arafāt to Muzdalifa and remember Him there, in the same way they should also all be together in Arafāt.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ﴿200﴾ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿201﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿202﴾

(200) Once you have completed your Hajj rites, remember Allāh as you remember your forefathers, or an even greater remembrance. From amongst man there are those who say, "Oh our Lord, grant us good in this world,' and they have no portion in the Hereafter." (201) From them there are also those who say, "Oh our Lord, grant us good in this world, good in the Hereafter and save us from the chastisement of the fire." (202) Such people shall receive a great share due to their actions, and Allāh is Swift at reckoning.

THE INSTRUCTION TO ENGAGE IN THE REMEMBRANCE *(DHIKR)* OF ALLĀH DURING THE DAYS AT MINA

On the 10th day of Dhul Hijjah, people return to Mina from Muzdalifa where they pelt the largest Jamara, then emerge from their Ihrām after shaving or trimming their hair. Thereafter, only the Tawāfuz Ziyārah and two more days of pelting remain. During the period of ignorance, the Arabs used to devote their time after Hajj to sing accolades to their forefathers, competing with one another in composing poetry in praise of these predecessors and their tribes. Allāh revealed the above verse to check this situation. [*Rūhul Ma'āni' v.2, p.89*]

The author of the tafsīr "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" translates the word "manasikakum" *("Hajj rites")* to mean the sacrificial animals. Therefore, the verse would mean that Allāh should be remembered after the animals have been slaughtered *(i.e. after pelting the largest Jamara)*. (*v.1, p.178*)

Thereafter Allāh makes mention of the prayers *(du'ās)* people make. Some only concern themselves with this world, asking for its amenities, while being totally oblivious of the Hereafter. They keep asking Allāh to make them as wealthy as their predecessors. Such people will receive nothing in the Hereafter. [*'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl'* *v.1, p.176*]

Then Allāh speaks of the supplication *(du'ā)* of the people of Belief *(Imān)*, who ask for the best of both worlds. The word 'hasanah" is derived from the root word "hasan" which denotes every conceivable form of good. This supplication *(du'ā)* indeed most concise in its conglomeration of everything good and blessed in both worlds. A hadith in "Bukhari' (*v.2, p.945*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to make this supplication *(du'ā)* very often.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم visited a companion *(Sahābi)* who was so ill that his voice had become very faint due to weakness and he had grown extremely thin. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he had been making any supplication *(du'ā)* to which he replied that he had always supplicated to Allāh to grant him all his due punishment in this world (rather than in the next). The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remarked, "*Subhan Allāh*", you cannot possibly bear that. Instead you should have made the supplication *(du'ā)*: *"Rabbanā Ā'tinā Fid Dunya Hasana Wa Fil Ākhirati Hasana Wa Qinā Adhāban Nār"* (i.e. *"Oh our Lord, grant us good in this world, good in the Hereafter and save us from the chastisement of the fire."*) The narrator, Sayyidina Anas, رضى الله عنه said that this person then made this supplication *(du'ā)*, whereupon Allāh cured him. [*Muslim, v.2, p.343*]

It is reported in Abu Dawūd that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite this supplication *(du'ā)* between the Rukn Yamāni and the Black Stone while making Tawāf.

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ (203)

(203) Carry out the dhikr (remembrance) of Allāh during the limited days. There shall be no sin upon the person who chooses to hasten during the two days, nor will there be any sin on him who wishes to delay, for him who possesses Piety *(taqwa)*. Fear Allāh and understand that unto Him shall you be gathered.

ENGAGING IN THE REMEMBRANCE OF ALLĀH *(DHIKR)* AND PELTING DURING THE DAYS OF TASHRĪQ

The days referred to in the above verse are the days of "Tashrīq" (10th, 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhul Hijjah), when people are stationed at Mina where they slaughter their animals and carry out the pelting. Remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* is prescribed here as well, as it was in Muzdalifa and at Arafāt.

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The pelting of the jamarāts and the Sa'ī between Safa and Marwa are especially

ordained for the remembrance of Allāh." [*Tirmidhi*]

The remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* is indeed a very great act, which is even more virtuous during certain days and times. Salāh, which is the greatest form of worship, entails remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* from beginning to the end, as Allāh stated in the Surah TāHā, *"Establish Salāh for My remembrance."* [*Surah 20, verse 14*]

The Adhān and Iqāmah before Salāh are also forms of remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)*, as are the Tasbīhs and supplication *(du'ās)* after Salāh. Similar is the case with Hajj, every action of which is an embodiment of remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)*, like the Talbiya, Sa'ī, Tawāf, Arafāt, Muzdalifa, Mina, pelting and sacrificing. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always encouraged remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* which is the very soul of this world.

Muslim (*v.1, p.84*) reports a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the Day of Judgment will only take place when there exists none upon the earth to say, "Allāh! Allāh! ' Muslim also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would remain perpetually in Allāh's remembrance,

It is written in 'Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.93*) that Allāh should glorified after every Salāh, sacrifice and when pelting. He adds that the "limited days" refer to the days of Tashrīq as reported from Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" states that the remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* on these days is the Takbīr. He writes that Sayyidina Umar and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه used to recite the Takbīr *(Allāhu Akbar , Allāh is the Greatest)* at Mina after every Salāh, in gatherings, before sleeping, on the road, etc.

The Takbīrut Tashrīq is also necessary on these days. It is compulsory *(Wājib)* to be recited after every obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh by every person whether in Mina or not. Men should recite it audibly and women silently. Its recitation commences from after Fajr of the 9th of Dhul Hijjah and continues up to Asr of the 13th, as reported by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said regarding these days, "Do not fast during these days for they are days of eating, drinking and making remembrance *(dhikr)*." [*Muslim, v.1, p.360*]

SOME LAWS PERTAINING TO THE PELTING

On the 10th day, only the largest Jamara (*jamar a Aqaba/Kubra*) is pelted. This may be done at any time between sunrise and dawn of the following day, but it is reprehensible *(Makrūh)* for the strong and healthy to do it at night. On the 11th and 12th pelting (*this time of all three Jamarāt*) commences from after noon, also lasting up to dawn of their respective following days. During these two, days it will also be reprehensible *(Makrūh)* for the able people to pelt at night. The pelting of all three days is compulsory *(Wājib)* for the person present in Mina during these days.

There exists three pillars in Mina which are called the Jamarāt (*plural of*

Jamarah). The first of these is close to the Mosque (*Masjid*) of Khaif and called the Jamarah Ūla (*first Jamarah*) or the Jamara Sughra (*small Jamarah*). Next is the Jamara Wusta (*middle Jamara*), followed by the third called the Jamarah Kubra (*big Jamarah*) or Jamarah Ukhra (*last Jamarah*). It is also called the Jamaratul Aqaba. The boundary of Mina is close to these Jamarāt. At the base of these Jamarāt, low circular retaining walls have been constructed in which a person's stones must fall.

It was at these three places that the Devils *(Shaytān)* attempted to dissuade Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام from sacrificing his son, whereupon the latter pelted him. In memory of this, the Haji does the same. At the time of throwing each stone, a person should recite:

"Bismillahi Allāhu Akbar raghman lish Shaytān wa ridal lirrahmān" ("I am pelting with the name of Allāh who is the Greatest, to disgrace devil *(Shaytān)* and please Allāh").

THE PERMISSIBILITY OF OMITTING THE PELTING ON THE 13TH DAY

After pelting on the 11th and 12th days, a person may choose to stay on a further day to pelt, or he may leave Mina. This is what is implied in the verse, *"There shall be no sin upon the person who chooses to hasten during the two days, nor will there be any sin on him who wishes to delay, for him who possesses Piety (taqwa)."* It is, however, best to stay on and leave Mina on the 13th.

During his farewell Hajj, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remained in Mina on the 13th and pelted as on the two previous days. This final pelting also commences after noon, but will terminate at sunset. The jurists have stated that it will be reprehensible *(Makrūh)* to omit the pelting of the 13th for that person who was still present in Mina when the sun set on the 12th. It will, however, be compulsory *(Wājib)* for that person to pelt on the 13th, who is still present in Mina at dawn of the 13th.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni' writes that the phrase *"no sin"* is repeated in both options to emphasis that either one is permissible. However, the objection may arise that if it is better to remain in Mina on the 13th, why is this phrase *"no sin"* used with reference to it? Rather another phrase should have been attached to it which denotes its preference. In reply to this, he says that the phrase *"no sin"* does not negate the preference of this second choice to stay in Mina. The reason why this mode of address is adopted is that the people during the period of ignorance would argue with each other saying that it was a sin to remain in Mina after the 12th, while others argued that it was sinful to leave. Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has tendered the same explanation in his tafsīr (*v.3, p.13*).

In the tafsīr 'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl', the opinion of other commentators has been quoted who state that the verse means that no sin whatsoever will remain to the account of any Haji, irrespective of whether he remains in Mina or not. In support of this they quote the hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says that the person who performs Hajj without committing any sin, nor speaking anything foul, will return (sinless) like a newborn baby. This view is also held by Sayydina Ali رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Masūd رضى الله عنه.

In the light of this opinion, the purport of the end part of the verse also becomes clear, viz. *"for those who possess Piety (taqwa)."* It would therefore mean that no sin would remain on any person after his Hajj, on condition that he had adopted piety *(abstinence from sins)* during its course. A statement of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه further substantiates this explanation in which he says, "Forgiveness from sins has been decided in favour of those who fear Allāh in their Hajj."

Sayyidina Abul Ālia رحمة الله عليه says that other commentators mention that *"he who possesses Piety (taqwa)'* means that a person should abstain from sins for the rest of his life.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُۥ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهِدُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِى قَلْبِهِۦ وَهُوَ
أَلَدُّ ٱلْخِصَامِ ﴿204﴾ وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ ٱلْحَرْثَ
وَٱلنَّسْلَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿205﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ ٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلْعِزَّةُ بِٱلْإِثْمِ ۚ
فَحَسْبُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿206﴾

(204) [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! From mankind is he whose speech enamours you in this worldly life, and he calls Allāh to witness over that which is in his heart; yet he is the most rigid of opponents. (205) When he turns away (from you) he exerts himself to cause corruption on earth and to destroy crops and progeny. And Allāh dislikes corruption. (206) When he is told to fear Allāh, pride spurs him on to commit sin. Hell will suffice for him, for it is a most evil resting place indeed.

THE SWEET-TALKING HYPOCRITES AND MISCHIEF-MAKERS

It is recorded in the tafsīr "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v 1, p 279*) that this verse was revealed with reference to a hypocrite by the name of Akhnas bin Shurayq. He was a handsome, sweet-talking person who used to sit with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم pretending to be a Muslim. He took oaths in the name of Allāh that he loved the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and as a result of his behaviour, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would seat him close to himself The above verse was revealed with regard to this.

THE ACTIONS OF AKHNAS BIN SHURAYQ

It is recorded in 'Lubābun Nuqūl" from a report of Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه that according to the commentator Suddi رحمة الله عليه, this verse referred to Akhnas bin Shurayq who pretended to accept Islām and enamoured the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with his talks. After leaving the company of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he once passed the field of a Muslim and set the crops alight while also severing the feet of some donkeys that grazed there. This verse was revealed with reference to this incident.

Allāma Munawi رحمة الله عليه [in his book "Faidul Qadīr Sharhu Jāmi'us Saghīr'

(*v.2 p.145*)] quotes certain scholars who say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم referred to this same Akhnas when he used to make the prayer *(du'ā)*, "Oh Allāh, I seek your protection from a plotting companion.

'Lubābun Nuqūl' reports the statement of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه in which he says that when the group including Sayyidina Āsim رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Marthad رضى الله عنه were reported to have met martyrdom, two hypocrites sarcastically commented, "Sad is the case of those who have landed in trouble and destroyed themselves. Neither did they remain (safe) at home, nor did they discharge their duty to propagate the message (of Islām)." It was at this juncture that this verse was revealed.

Whatever the direct cause (was) behind the revelation of this verse, its comprehensiveness includes all such people who attempt to carve their niche amongst the Muslim public and elite, using sweet-talk and flattery. Although they are really hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*, they beguile the Muslims by swearing that Allāh knows they are true Muslims. Since their only objective is to attain status and fame in this world, they will leave no stone unturned to harm the Muslims and plot methods to plunder the Muslim states.

The same modus operandi employed by Akhnas bin Shurayq has been used by hypocrites throughout the centuries, and continues up to this day.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that this verse applies to all such people who, while concealing their infidelity *(Kufr)*, adopt hypocrisy and lies to express with their tongues the exact opposite of what is in their hearts. He adds that this verse emphasises caution in all worldly and religious matters. [*v.3, p.10*]

Concerning the phrase *"in this worldly life"* Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه writes that Akhnas bin Shurayq's talks with regard to the matters of this world appealed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It could also mean that he used to speak in this manner to acquire some worldly gains. Yet another interpretation is that his speech and eloquence will only seem appealing in this world, while in the Hereafter his words will hold absolutely no weight. Due to his overwhelming fear in the Hereafter, he will be rendered speechless. [*v.1, p.139*]

THE CONTEMPTIBILITY OF A QUARRELSOME AND FLATTERING TONGUE

The phrase in this verse 'aladdul khisām'is a conglomeration of two words. The first is in the superlative tense, indicating an extremely quarrelsome nature. The second word also holds a similar meaning, lending emphasis to the connotation of a person who is exceedingly bent on quarrelling and disputing. The commentator Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه translates it as *"the most rigid of opponents,"* which is an implied meaning. This verse therefore serves to vilify any person who strongly argues in support of falsehood.

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The worst of people is he who is very quarrelsome." [*Bukhari, v.2, p.649/1066*]

In today's times, it is regarded to be very intelligent for a person to be able to win others over by sweet-talk and flattery, and has become an integral part of politics. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has stated, "Towards the end of time,

there will be such people who will utilise the Dīn *(religion)* to achieve their worldly motives. To display humility, they will wear woollen clothes, while their tongues will be sweeter than sugar. Their hearts, however, will be the hearts of wolves. Allāh will say, 'Are these people fooled by My tolerance that they are so bold? I swear that I will inflict such a punishment upon them that will startle even the most sensible ones amongst them."

THE EVIL OF PRIDE

People who only desire the material things of this world and its honour possess no degree of submission in their hearts. They consider it insulting to their dignity to accept the truth from another. In this way, they remain adamant upon their infidelity *(Kufr)*, Polytheism *(shirk)* and sinful lifestyles. They cannot bring themselves to accept the truth. In reference to this trait, Allāh mentions, *"When he is told to fear Allāh, pride spurs him on to commit sin."*

WHAT IS PRIDE?

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم defined pride as follows, "Pride is to defy the truth and to consider others inferior." When many people are advised to abstain from sin or are presented with any good advice, they disregard the preacher on account of his nationality, age or lineage. This is a display of pride which is a trait of the hypocrites and mischief-makers.

The verse condemns such people to the fire of Hell. The Arabic word "mihād" (used to describe Hell in this verse), refers to a bed or a mat. In the Hereafter, they will be made to lie upon burning cinders, totally unlike the soft and comfortable beds to which they are accustomed in this world. Here they find rest and peace on their beds, whereas there it will be the exact opposite.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِى نَفْسَهُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿207﴾

(207) From mankind is he who buys his soul seeking Allāh 's pleasure. And Allāh is Most Clement unto His bondsmen.

THE VIRTUE OF THE PERSON WHO GIVES HIS LIFE AND WEALTH FOR THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH

It is narrated in "Hilyatul Awliya" on the authority of Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه, that when Sayyidina Suhaib Rūmi رضى الله عنه left Makkah to migrate to Madinah, a group of Polytheists pursued him to prevent his exit. He alighted from his animal, placed an arrow in his bow and addressed them thus, "Oh people of Quraish! You are well aware that I am a much better archer than all of you. I swear by Allāh that none of you will be able to approach me as long as I have a single arrow in my quiver. Once these have expired, I shall fight with my sword for as long as strength remains in my arms. On the contrary, I can inform you of the whereabouts of my wealth and clothing in Makkah, which you may have for yourselves and allow me to proceed." They agreed to this second

option and he set out on his way to Madinah.

Upon reaching Madinah, he presented himself before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who told him, "O Abu Yahya, your transaction was indeed profitable.' This the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repeated twice, meaning that his bartering off a bit of this worldly possessions was cheap in exchange for his freedom. Prior to his arrival, Jibrīl عليه السلام had already informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the episode.

In the "Mustadrak" of Hakim, the addition is reported in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse to him, which had been revealed before he arrived in Madinah.

In the tafsīr of Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه (*v.1 p.248*), Sayyidina Suhaib رضى الله عنه himself says that when he intended to migrate, the Quraish told him, You came here as a pauper, amassed much wealth, and now wish to take it all with you. We swear by Allāh that this shall not happen!" It was then that he offered them all his wealth in exchange for a safe passage. Upon reaching Madinah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that it was indeed a good bargain.

Some commentators have translated the word "*Yashrī*" as "sells" (his soul). Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes that this verse applies to all those who engage in Jihād *(religious war)*, since they sell themselves to Allāh, as is referred to in the following verse of the Qur'ān, "*Verily Allāh has purchased from the believers their lives and wealth in exchange of Heaven (Jannah).'* [*Surah Tauba, verse III*]

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that the fact that Sayyidina Suhaib رضى الله عنه was prepared to fight the Polytheists, denoted that he would sell his soul for Allāh's cause. Leaving this particular incident aside, the verse can apply to any person who gives his life and property for Allāh's pleasure.

In the tafsīr "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.2 p.183*), it is reported that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه considered this verse to refer to those who fight to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ فِى ٱلسِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿208﴾ فَإِن زَلَلْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْكُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿209﴾

(208) O you who believe, enter into Islām completely, and do not follow in the footsteps of Shaytān, for verily he is your open enemy. (209) So if you have to err after the clear signs have come to you, then know that definitely Allāh is Most Powerful, The All Wise.

THE ORDER TO ENTER COMPLETELY INTO ISLĀM

Certain Muslims who had converted from Judaism wished to keep up some Jewish practices such as according esteem to Saturdays and abstaining from camel meat. They told the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that since the Torah was also the

book of Allāh, they recited it in their Tahajjud Salāh. Allāh revealed the above verse on this occasion, informing them that after the advent of Islām, no other religion should remain. [*"Durrul Manthūr" and "Baydawi"*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have come to you with clear signs. Even if Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was alive, he too will have no option but to follow me." [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (v.1, p.183) from Ahmad and Bayhaqi as recorded in "Mishkātul Masābīh," p. 30*]

EVERY PERSON MUST ABIDE BY THE LAWS OF ISLĀM IN EVERY DOMINION

This verse instructs every person to accept all the injunctions of Islām and practise accordingly, irrespective of his position. This is binding upon the ruler and the subject, the big and the small, the employer and the employee, the businessman and farmer alike. Many people are under the misconception that Islām is restricted to a few actions like Salāh, fasting, zakāh, etc. They do not apply Islām to their social, economic and political lives. They conduct business as they please, buying and selling any commodity they wish. Many people seek employment at any institution, not paying the slightest heed to whether it is Halāl or Harām.

Many do not consider the Shari'ah in the matters of marriage, committing major sins in the process while thinking that the Shari'ah does not apply to occasions of rejoicing. They pay no heed to the advice given to them by the Ulama (*religious scholars*), saying that these scholars are merely standing in the way of progress. They consider their religion to be like the religion of those people who care not to mould their lifestyle within the framework of its restrictions (*May Allāh save us from this*).

Our Dīn *(religion)* is perfect and complete, encompassing every aspect of life. There exists no aspect of life which is not included in its teachings. For one to practice some aspects of Dīn *(religion)* while neglecting others, will be in conformance to the behaviour of those Jews who were addressed in Surah Baqarah. Allāh told them, *'Do you believe in part of the book and reject part of it."* [*Surah 2, verse 85*]

Many people merely claim to be Muslims while they do not even perform the obligations *(Farāidh)* of Dīn *(religion)*, while others restrict the Dīn *(religion)* to a few actions only. If they are advised to leave their unlawful *(harām)* employment, interest dealings, or trading in unlawful *(harām)* commodities, they do not accept. They waive this off saying that it is their livelihood which cannot be neglected. This foolish statement is tantamount to saying that earning one's livelihood brings complete freedom.

THE DEVIANCE OF POLITICAL LEADERS

Some present day Islāmic countries employ methods in their administration that are learnt from the Infidels *(kuffār)*. They enforce laws which are oppressive and contradict the Shari'ah. In spite of all this, they are audacious enough to claim the Islāmic identity of their countries. It is the sway of Satan *(Shaytān)* that makes them apply a limited number of Islāmic laws while turning a blind eye to

many others. It is for this reason that, after instructing complete entry into Islām, Allāh says, *"And do not follow in the footsteps of Satan (Shaytān), for verily he is your open enemy."* It is indeed very strange that people swear and curse *Satan (Shaytān)*, yet pander to his wishes.

"If you err after the clear signs have come to you, then know that verily Allāh is Most Powerful, The All Wise." This verse makes it clear that it is not a light matter that a person does not enter into Islām in spite of receiving full knowledge. This constitutes rebellion against Allāh who is All Powerful. None can overcome Him, nor escape His punishment. Allāh is All Wise and does not hasten to punish anyone. Therefore, no person should dwell under the misconception that he is safe from Allāh and will not be taken to task.

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ ٱلْغَمَامِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَقُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ ۚ
وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿210﴾

(210) They await Allāh and the angels to come to them beneath the shadow of clouds, and all matters are decided. All matters return unto Allāh.

THE WARNING FOR NOT ACCEPTING THE TRUTH

Those people who refuse to enter into Islām after the clear signs and proofs have been presented before them seem to be awaiting the decision of Allāh against them. After this, there will be no second chance for them. Allāh will be the Supreme Judge on the Day of Judgment when none other shall have any say whatsoever. Every disbeliever *(kāfir)* should consider his case very carefully.

LESSON The real meaning of the phrase *"Allāh and the angels to come to them"* cannot be mentally perceived. A Muslim should believe in it, and not seek to uncover its literal meaning. Some commentators have stated that it refers to the order of Allāh for punishment.

سَلْ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ كَمْ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مِّنْ ءَايَةٍۭ بَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَمَن يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿211﴾

(211) Ask the children of Isrā'īl how many clear signs we have given them. Whosoever chooses to alter the bounty of Allāh after it has come to Him, then Allāh is severe in punishment

THE INGRATITUDE OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL AND THEIR RESULTANT PUNISHMENT

Many signs and miracles were presented to the Bani Isrā'īl which would have been to their benefit had they taken heed. However, they chose to go astray, changing the bounty of Allāh into a curse for themselves. Thus, they earned Allāh's wrath in this world as well as the next.

The author of the tafsīr Ma'ālimut Tanzīl' [*v.1, p.184*] comments on these *clear signs'*. He says that these signs refer to the cane of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام as well as his shining hand and the splitting of the sea. Other commentators state that these refer to the clear description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Torah and the Injīl. The Jews and Christians went astray in spite of all these signs, thereby transforming what was a bounty of Allāh into punishment for themselves. This will be the outcome of anyone who behaves in a like manner.

زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۘ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢١٢﴾

(212) The life of this world has been beautified for those who disbelieve and they make a jest of the believers. But the pious will be above them on the Day of Judgment, and Allāh provides for whom He desires without reservation.

THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THE WORLD FOR THE NONBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* AND THEIR MOCKERY OF THE MUSLIMS

According to the above verse, the reason for the obstinacy of the nonbelievers *(kuffār)* is their infatuation with the things of this world. By observing the practices of Islām, they fear a deficiency in their worldly possessions. It is for this reason that they remain in disbelief They mock the Muslims because the Muslims do not possess much worldly possessions which they (the nonbelievers) consider to be a symbol of total success.

They do not realise that the comforts of this world are temporary whereas the Hereafter is everlasting. The people of Belief *(Imān)* will enjoy elevated positions while the nonbelievers *(kuffār)* will be condemned to Hell. Allāh says in Surah Mutaffifīn, *"On this day (Day of Judgment) the believers, while looking on from their couches, will laugh at the nonbelievers (kuffār)"* [*Surah 83, verses 34/5*]

Many commentators have written that the verse under discussion was revealed with regard to the Arab idolaters like Abu Jahl etc. Their wealth and comfortable lifestyles intoxicated them. They laughed at the poor Muslims like Sayyidina Amār bin Yāsir رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Suhaib رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Khabāb رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه.

According to another opinion, this verse was revealed with regard to the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* like Abdullāh bin Ubbay. They used to mock and jeer at the poor immigrants of Madinah saying, "Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم says that he will conquer other lands with these people!"

Sayyidina Atā رضى الله عنه says that the verse referred specifically to the leaders of the Jewish tribe who used to laugh at the poor immigrants. Allāh, however, promised the Muslims the wealth and the Banu Nadhīr and the Banu Quraizah (two Jewish tribes of Madinah) without a fight. Consequently this came to pass. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl," v.1, p.185*]

"Allāh provides for whom He desires without reservation." Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that Allāh may accord to His chosen bondsmen whatever he desires without them having to make any effort. Then too, He will not require them to account for any of this wealth on the Day of Judgment. At the same time, He inspires them to do good deeds.

The phrase *"without reservation"* has been interpreted by some to mean that none can prevent Allāh from giving whatever He desires. There will be none to take account of this since the treasures of Allāh are limitless.

كَانَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنزَلَ مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ فِيمَا ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ فَهَدَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَا ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢١٣﴾

(213) Mankind was one community and Allāh sent (unto them) the prophets as bearers of good tidings and warners; and revealed to them the scriptures with the truth so that it may judge between mankind concerning the matters wherein they differed. Because of their animosity for each other, those to whom it (the scripture) was given differed concerning it after clear proofs had come to them. By His will, Allāh guided those who believe to the truth of that concerning which they differed. Allāh guides whom He wills unto the straight path.

MANKIND WAS ONE COMMUNITY UNTIL THEY SPLIT INTO DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS BECAUSE OF MUTUAL ANIMOSITY

It is narrated in "Durrul Manthūr" [*v.1, p.243*] that Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه reports that all those who lived during the period between Sayyidina Adam and Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام were rightly guided. They all practised upon the true Shari'ah until differences began to creep between them. It was then that Allāh sent Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام who was the first messenger of Allāh on earth. He was sent to the people when their differences had led them to abandon the truth. After this, Allāh continuously sent prophets and books as a proof against mankind.

According to Kalbi and Waqidi رحمة الله عليه [*'Tafsīr Qurtubi,"v.3, p.31*] the 'ummatow wāhida' (*single community*) refers to those Muslims who accompanied Nūh عليه السلام on the ark since there were no other Muslims alive at that time. After the demise of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, differences arose amongst this group, resulting in the rise of nonbelievers and Polytheists

Besides the above, numerous other interpretations have been offered with regard to the meaning of 'ummatow wāhida'. In each case however, the meaning of the verse will be that at some time in human history, mankind was a single community, having the same religion and beliefs according to the orders of Allāh. It was after this that, due to the misguidance of Devil *(Shaytān)* and

mutual animosity, they split into many groups and denominations. To correct the situation, Allāh sent the various Prophet *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures.

These prophets عليهم السلام applied themselves to guide man, showing them the path to Heaven *(Jannah)* and warning them against the fire of Hell. By virtue of religion, Allāh showed man the distinction between right and wrong, thereby deciding their mutual differences. However, many chose not to accept the preaching of these prophets عليهم السلام, preferring to continue with their mutual differences. Allāh, because of His infinite mercy, guided the believers to realise the truth and stay clear from falsehood.

'Only those to whom it (the scripture) was given differed Concerning it. "It is reported in 'Durrul Manthūr" [*v.1, p.242*] that Sayyidina Ubayy bin Ka'ab رضى الله عنه said that the people referred to in this verse are the Bani Isrā'īl. He said that they rebelled against each other because of their greed for wealth and territory. Allāh guided those of Belief *(Imān)* to realise the truth of these differences and remain fast on their religion. They disassociated themselves from those who constantly caused friction. As a result, these people will also bear testimony on the Day of Judgment against the nations of Nūh, Hud, Sālih and Shu'aib عليهم السلام. They will say that these prophets عليهم السلام had propagated their religion but the people refused to accept.

Throughout the ages, this process has continued; as a result there have always existed those on the truth and those on falsehood. The believers should understand from this that the nonbelievers *(kuffār)* will ceaselessly beg to differ, refusing to accept the truth despite its evidence. As a result, they will continue harming the Muslims, which may sometimes result in full-scale war. Therefore, "Sabr' (patience and steadfastness) is required as well as the need to spend one's life and wealth to stem the tide of infidelity *(Kufr)*. The requirement of Belief *(Imān)* is that a person remains steadfast as Allāh now explains the following verses.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُم مَّثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِن قَبْلِكُم مَّسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَىٰ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ (214)

(214) Do you think that you will enter paradise while yet there has not come to you the like of (that which came to) those before you? Affliction and adversity befell them and they were shaken till the messenger (of Allāh) and the believers said, "When will the help of Allāh come?" Surely, the help of Allāh is near.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO BE PATIENT AT TIMES OF AFFLICTION AND THE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM PAST NATIONS

The Muslims in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were constantly harassed by the idolaters, the Jews and the hypocrites. In Makkah, the idolaters

harassed them, while in Madinah it was the Jews and Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* who left no stone unturned to make their lives miserable. This resulted in the furious battles of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. Besides this, the Muslims also had to withstand the difficulty of hunger and thirst because of a lack of resources.

"Asbābun Nuzūl' (*p.60*) reports that this verse was revealed on the occasion of the battle of the trench when the Muslims suffered extreme hunger, thirst, cold and fear. So great was their difficulty that Allāh says in Surah Ahzāb, *"and the hearts reached the throats"* [*Surah 33, verse 10*]. Referring to the same episode, Allāh says in the next verse of Surah Ahzāb, *"On this occasion, the Believers (Mu'minīn) were tested and severely shaken."*

Seeing these conditions, the hypocrites began making all sorts of absurd statements, many of which were utterances of infidelity *(Kufr)*. Allāh revealed this verse informing them that the Heaven *(Jannah)* that they aspired for cannot be had by merely sitting back, but they will have to endure certain tests first. The nations of the past endured much adversities until they began to wonder when Allāh's help would come to them. It was only after great trial that Allāh then assisted them.

The hypocrites said, *"The promise of Allāh and His Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *was a deception."* [*Surah Ahzāb, verse 12*]. The verse under discussion answers this statement of theirs and, at the same time, provides consolation to the Muslims. It tells them that these difficulties are nothing new, but were also experienced by those before. Finally, when they asked when the help of Allāh would come, Allāh sent it to them as this verse states, 'the *help of Allāh is near"* Allāh's assistance is certain in this world as well as in the Hereafter when the Muslims are assured a safe passage to Heaven *(Jannah)*.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه states that this verse resembles the one in Surah Inshirah where Allāh says twice, *"Verily with difficulty comes ease"*. [*verse 6*] Every prophet and his followers, especially Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, withstood great trials. This will always continue as Allāh says In Surah Ankabūt, *"Alif Lām Mīm. Do people think that they will be safe to say, 'We believe!' without being tested? Most assuredly We have put to test those before them, and most certainly We shall come to know those who are truthful and those who are liars."*

Sayyidina Khabāb رضى الله عنه reports that once he complained to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the difficulties they suffered in Makkah, asking him to make supplication *(du'ā)* for its alleviation. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was reclining in the shade of the Ka'ba, but sat up to say, "In the times gone by, some Muslims were placed in pits, then sawed in two, but this did not deter them from their religion. The heads of others were combed with combs of steel, which would penetrate their flesh and sinews, reaching the skull. This would also not deter them from their religion." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh,"p .525, from Bukhari*]

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنفِقُونَ ۖ قُلْ مَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ ﴿215﴾

(215) They ask you (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم what they should spend? Say, "That which you spend of good, should be given to parents, relatives, orphans, needy and wayfarers. Whatsoever good you do, Allāh is well aware of it.

UPON WHOM SHOULD CHARITY BE SPENT

"Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p 60*) narrates from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that this verse was revealed concerning the question posed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by Sayyidina Amr bin Jamūh رضى الله عنه, who asked, "What should we spend in charity, and upon whom should we spend?" "Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1 p.243*) reports from Ibn Juraij رحمة الله عليه that this verse refers to optional *(Nafl)* charity, not to zakāh.

From the above report, it is gathered that two questions were asked. One concerned the type of charity, while the other concerned the recipients. This verse answers the second question. Since a person will naturally spend on himself and his wife and children, these are not mentioned. Parents receive first mention, followed by relatives who include all, be they close or distant. Then follows the other categories in which relatives belonging to these categories receive priority.

Abu Dawūd reports a hadith wherein a person asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Towards whom should I show kindness?' The reply was, "Your mother." He then enquired, "To whom next?" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Your father, then your next of kin, thereafter those who follow them."

Whatsoever good you do, Allāh is well aware of it." Allāh knows all the good that a person does, be it little or more, and will bestow the full reward upon the doer. The wealth spent in charity has been referred to as "khair" *(good)*, denoting lawful *(halāl)* wealth since giving unlawful *(harām)* wealth is no charity at all. Usage of this word also denotes wealth spent sincerely for the pleasure of Allāh because spending without sincerity is no charity at all.

Commentators mention that the second question has been given preference because if the proper recipients are not identified, no amount of charity will earn any reward. Much has already been discussed regarding kindness to the poor under the verse *"Virtue is not that you turn your faces towards the east and west"* [*Surah Baqara, verse 177*]

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تُحِبُّوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿216﴾

(216) Warfare has been ordained for you though you may dislike it. Perchance you may dislike something that is good for you and you may like something that is bad for you. Allāh knows and you know not.

THE OBLIGATION OF JIHĀD *(RELIGIOUS WAR)* AND ENCOURAGEMENT TOWARDS IT

While the Muslims were in Makkah, they were weak and few in number

never possessing the capability nor the divine permission for Jihād *(religious war)*. After migrating to Madinah, they received the order to fight their enemies in defence, as a verse of Surah Hajj proclaims, *"Permission (to fight) has been granted to those being attacked because they are oppressed"* [*Surah 22, verse 39*]. Later on the order came to fight the Infidels *(kuffār)* even though they do not initiate the aggression. [*"Qurtubi" v.3, p.38*]

It appears from this verse that it is the binding duty of every Muslim to be always engaged in Jihād *(religious war)*, just as he is duty bound to perform his Salāh and other obligatory duties. However, this is not so, as the Ahādīth and Qur'ān show, e.g. the verse, *"All the Believers (Mu'minīn) should* not go into battle collectively. A group should remain from every community to acquire deep understanding of the Dīn" [*Surah Taubah, verse 122*].

Jurists have written that at times Jihād *(religious war)* is compulsory upon every Muslim, while at times it is only compulsory upon a group of Muslims. Engaging in Jihād *(religious war)*, either in defence or offence, is permissible. The word Jihād *(religious war)* is derived from the root word "juhd," which means to strive, exert or apply oneself It would, therefore, refer to any form of exertion or application which is directed towards uplifting the Dīn *(religion)*. Allāh says in Surah Bara'a *"Go out in battle lightly or heavily, and strive with your wealth and souls in the path of Allāh. This is best for you, if you but knew."* [*Surah 9, verse 41*]

Ahadith of Abu Dawūd reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Fight the idolaters with your wealth, lives and tongues.' Fighting them with the tongue will include debates, speaking against them and encouraging the Muslims to fight them. Maintaining all forms of Jihād *(religious war)* is necessary.

Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ahkāmul Qur'ān" (*v.3 p.113*) that it is the opinion of Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, Abu Yusuf رحمة الله عليه, Muhammad رحمة الله عليه, Mālik رحمة الله عليه, etc that Jihād *(religious war)* is obligatory *(Fardh)* up to the Day of Judgment. However, under normal circumstances, it is not obligatory *(Fardh)* on everyone. Should a group engage themselves, it will suffice for the rest, unless those fighting cannot cope with the onslaught of the Infidels *(kuffār)*. Then, if it is feared that these Infidels *(kuffār)* will advance to destroy all the Muslims in their towns, it will be incumbent on every Muslim to join in the fight.

None are of the opinion that permissibility exists for the Muslims of any country to remain idle when those of another country are at risk of losing their lives or land. Other verses pointing towards the compulsion of Jihād *(religious war)* are:

- *"And fight in Allāh 's path until no corruption exists on the earth and the Dīn (religion) remains only for Allāh."*
- *"And fight them so that Allāh may punish them by your hands."*
- *"And fight those who do not believe in Allāh and the Day of Judgment."*
- *"And fight the idolaters wherever you find them."*
- *"Fight the idolaters collectively as they fight you collectively."*

The author of the book "Hidāyh" writes that Jihād *(religious war)* is sufficiency obligation *(Fardh Kifāyah)*. If a sector of the Muslims engage therein, the compulsion will fall from the remaining Muslims. On the other hand, if none will uphold this responsibility, all will be sinful. It will be incumbent to fight the Infidels *(kuffār)* even though they do not initiate the attack. If the Infidels *(kuffār)* attack the Muslims, it will be compulsory for every Muslim to defend. In this situation, a woman may even fight without the consent of her husband, and a slave without that of his master because Jihād *(religious war)* will now be deemed Fardh Ain *(obligatory upon every individual)*. [*"Hidayah", Chapter of Siyar*]

As was previously mentioned, Jihād *(religious war)* should not merely be fought for the sake of fighting, but for the promotion of the Dīn *(religion)* and its dominance. Numerous rules and regulations apply to Jihād *(religious war)* which are discussed in the books of hadith and fiqh.

SOME LAWS PERTAINING TO JIHĀD *(RELIGIOUS WAR)*

The author of "Hidayah" writes that when the Muslims lay siege to any fort or city of the Infidels *(kuffār)*, they should first invite them to accept Islām. If they accept, no fighting shall take place since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have been commanded to fight until people proclaim *'La Ilaha Illallāh'*, and accept the religion I have brought." [*Muslim*]

If they refuse to accept Islām, they should be invited to pay the "Jizya" (a tax) which will allow them to enjoy the same privileges and share the same responsibilities as the Muslims (*with regard to the defence of the state*). The Polytheists (*idolaters*) of Arabia, however, will not be given the choice of Jizya. They may either accept Islām or fight. It is not permissible to fight anyone who has not first been given an invitation to Islām. Even those who had received this invitation at some earlier stage should preferably be extended another invitation.

When, finally, they refuse to accept Islām and jizya, the Muslims may commence battle, asking Allāh's help. In this battle no women, children, aged, blind or paralysed people may be killed, unless they offer some resistance or are ruling. [*"Hidāya', chapter on "Kayfiyatul Harb"*]

Since the Muslims have forsaken Jihād *(religious war)*, their enemies have gained the upper hand and have bound them to such treaties which these Infidels *(kuffār)* continuously contravene. Jihād *(religious war)* brings only benefit for the Muslims, securing authority for them. Muslims have been destroyed because of their loss of conviction in the promises of Allāh and because they comply with the dictates of the Infidels *(kuffār)*. They have lost the fervour to serve the Dīn *(religion)*, having been confined to minute states because of their love for position and power.

Each is satisfied with his little dominion, employing the support of the Infidels *(kuffār)* to remain in power. This configuration of states has divided the power and strength of the Muslims, causing them to be thirsty for each other's blood on account of petty national differences. If all the Muslims were united under one leader, and prepared to give their lives for Islām, none would have the courage to even raise their gazes in enmity towards them. Recognising these differences between the Muslims, the Infidels *(kuffār)* have exploited the situation

to divide the Muslims into various splinter states, leaving each one too weak to be any force to be reckoned with. However, it is not too late for unity to again set matters right.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE MUJAHIDĪN

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd, Anas bin Mālik and Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrate that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'A single morning or evening in the path of Allāh is better than the entire world and whatever it contains."[*Bukhari, v.1, p.392*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I swear by Allāh that I wish to be slain in the path of Allāh, then given life to again be slain in his path. Then again restored to life to lose it in Allāh's way, and then again the third time." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.392*]

Sayyidina Abdur Rahman bin Jubair رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The fire of Hell will never touch the person whose feet were soiled in the path of Allāh." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.394*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No person who will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* would want to return to this world even if he is given everything therein. The only exception is the Shahīd (martyr), who will desire to be returned to meet martyrdom another ten times because of the honour accorded to him." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.395*]

Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, 'To guard the borders of an Islāmic state for one day and night is superior than fasting for an entire month together with performing Salāh during this period. Should a person pass away in this condition, he will continue to receive the rewards of all his actions, his sustenance will continue reaching him, and he shall be saved from the punishment of the grave." [*Muslim, v.2, p.142*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who dies without fighting in Jihād *(religious war)* and not even considering doing so, dies upon a branch of nifāq (hypocrisy)" [*Muslim,v.2, p.141*]

The same Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, The person who is injured in the path of Allāh, and only He knows who was injured in his path, will appear on the Day of Judgment in such a way that the wound will still be bleeding. The colour will be that of blood, but the smell shall be of musk.' [*"Bukhari", v.2, p.313. Muslim', v.2, p.133*]

THE REWARD OF SPENDING IN THE PATH OF ALLĀH

Once, when a person presented a reined camel for use in the path of Allāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "In lieu of this you shall, on the Day of Judgment, receive seven hundred camels, all of which will be bridled." [*Muslim, v.2, p.137*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "The person who supplies the equipment for the one going out in the path of Allāh has also made Jihād *(religious war)* (i.e. receives the same reward as the Mujāhid). The person who

constantly sees to the needs of the Mujahid's family has also made Jihād *(religious war).'* [*Bukhari, v.1, p.399*]

REPLY TO THE OBJECTION RAISED BY THE ENEMIES OF ISLĀM AGAINST JIHĀD *(RELIGIOUS WAR)*

The Infidels *(kuffār)* have always portrayed Jihād *(religious war)* in a negative light because their enmity does not allow them to perceive the invitation of Islām. Islām wishes to call humanity towards belief in the unity of Allāh, all His prophets, scriptures, the Qur'ān, the finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the religion brought by him. The person believing in all of this is a Muslim, worthy of entry into Heaven *(Jannah)*. The one who does not accept is a infidel *(kāfir)*, condemned to eternal doom. The sole aim of Jihād *(religious war)* is to invite mankind to Islām; as was previously explained when mention was made of the method of Jihād *(religious war)* as presenting to the Infidels *(kuffār)* the options of either accepting Islām, paying the Jizya or (finally) war. The prime objective is to rescue them from the everlasting torment of Hell, which is a favour on them, even if it is achieved by Jihād *(religious war)*. If the lives of a few are lost in Jihād *(religious war)*, but the rest of the nation accepted Islām, it would be to the overall benefit of that nation.

Even if the Infidels *(kuffār)* accept only to pay the Jizya, it will still be to their advantage because, firstly, their lives will be saved. Secondly, under the Islāmic rule, they will receive exposure to Islām hearing the adhān (call of the prayer), witnessing the Salāh and other devotional acts, and benefit from the cordial behaviour and piety of the Muslims. In this manner, they will gain the impetus to accept Islām, thus saving themselves from the pending doom of the Hereafter.

The Jizya is in lieu of security and is not collected from every infidel *(kāfir)*, nor is it an exorbitant fee. All these factors should be understood, whereafter one will realize that Jihād *(religious war)* is to the advantage if the Infidels *(kuffār)*.

The kāfir is a rebel against Allāh since the act of infidelity *(Kufr)* is the severest rebellion. In any country, the punishment for rebellion is most severe. The infidel *(kāfir)* lives on Allāh's earth, eats what He provides, and utilises all the amenities provided by Him. Despite all of this, he refuses to believe in Allāh and even worships others, ascribing them as partners of Allāh. Therefore, such people do not really deserve to live on Allāh's earth. There can be no objection to one who wants to rid the world of such evil practices such as infidelity *(Kufr)* and Polytheism *(shirk)*.

It is indeed ironic that the people of Europe should raise this objection when they have plundered numerous countries, leaving tremendous bloodshed in their wake. In 1871, the British massacred innumerable people in India while the two world wars accounted for the loss of even more lives. The bomb that devastated Hiroshima and the so-called crusades were nothing but thoughtless massacre. In aid of what noble cause did all of the above take place? Were they not to satiate territorial avarice or destroy Islām in the propagation of infidelity *(Kufr)*? These are the deeds of the very nations who falsely claim to be followers of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام, and boast that their prophet instructed them to turn the other cheek to the person who slaps the one.

Then there are the idolaters of India who consider weapons to be a great vice and shy away from even killing a rat. On the other hand, they are always thirsty for the blood of the Muslim, not missing a single opportunity to cause strife between them. Such faceless objectors fail to look at themselves in the minor before flinging their dung at others who only wish to trample rebellion underfoot.

"Perchance you may dislike something that is good for you and you may like something that is bad for you. Allāh knows and you know not." Reference is made here to Jihād *(religious war)* which is instinctively disliked, whereas its results are extremely fruitful. Ignoring Jihād *(religious war)* by remaining at home to tend to one's business seems very pleasing, but is in actual fact destructive and a source of deprivation. Besides Jihād *(religious war)*, numerous other factors are such that they seem detrimental while they are actually beneficial, while other things are vice versa. This phenomenon is seen daily. Therefore, success is in following only the commandments of Allāh.

"Allāh knows and you know not." Only He possesses real knowledge and understands precisely what is beneficial and detrimental for his creation.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلشَّهْرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ ۖ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ ۖ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌۢ بِهِۦ وَٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِۦ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ ٱلْقَتْلِ ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَـٰتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَـٰعُوا۟ ۚ وَمَن يَرْتَدِدْ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَـٰلُهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ (217) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَـٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (218)

(217) They question you (Oh Muhammad) صلى الله عليه وسلم with regard to warfare in the sacred months. Say, "Warfare therein is a grave sin, but to prevent (man) from Allāh 's way, to disbelieve in Him and the Masjidul Harām, and to expel its people thence is a far greater sin with Allāh. Corruption is worse than killing." They will continue fighting you till they turn you away from your religion if they can. Whosoever turns away from his religion, then dies in disbelief such people are the ones whose actions are lost in this world and in the Hereafter. These are the dwellers of the fire wherein they shall abide forever. (218) Verily those who believe and those who emigrate and strive in the way of Allāh, these have hope of Allāh 's mercy. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

CAUSING CORRUPTION AND PREVENTING PEOPLE FROM THE PATH OF ALLĀH AND THE MASJIDUL HARĀM IS WORSE THAN KILLIING

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once appointed Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Jahash رضى الله عنه to lead a contingent of Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم with instructions to spy on a caravan of the Quraish at a place called batn Nakhlah (this was located between Makkah and Tā'if). Upon reaching their destination, the group of Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم saw the caravan passing with a load of merchandise from Tā'if. This caravan comprised of Amr bin Hadrami, Hakam bin Kaysan, Uthman bin Abdullah bin Mughira and Naufal bin Abdullāh. When these Infidels *(kuffār)* saw the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, they were startled. When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Jahash رضى الله عنه noted their fear, he consulted with his companions, and they decided to attack the caravan.

Consequently, Sayyidina Wāqid bin Abdullah Tamīmi رضى الله عنه shot an arrow that killed Amr bin Hadrami, while Hakam bin Kaysan and Uthman bin Abdullāh were taken captive. These were the very first prisoners of war captured in Islām. The fourth person escaped. The captives as well as all the merchandise were taken to Madinah. This episode transpired on the day after the 29th of Jumādal Ukhra. The Sahāba رضى الله عنهم were unable to determine whether it was the 30th of this jumādal Ukhra or the 1st of Rajab, which is one of the four sacred months wherein fighting was forbidden during the period of ignorance, as well as at the beginning of Islām. (The sacred months were Dhul Qa'dah, Dhul Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab).

Although the month of Rajab was not confirmed when the incident occurred, the Polytheists of Makkah exploited the situation to make it a target of criticism. They said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had permitted war in the sacred months and killed people who were innocently earning their sustenance. They inflated the issue and scorned the Muslims who had participated in the skirmish.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also disapproved of the incident and did not lay a hand on the captives, nor the captured goods. He reminded these Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم that he had not permitted fighting during these months and they regretted their action very much. They pleaded that they were unable to judge the month since the moon of Rajab had not yet appeared. At this juncture Allāh revealed this verse, whereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, according to the Islāmic principles of distributing booty, separated one fifth of the captured merchandise and distributed the remaining portion amongst those Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم who participated in this expedition. The two captives were set free on ransom, but one of them viz. Hakam bin Kaysan accepted Islām and remained in Madinah. He was martyred at Ba'īr Ma'ūna. The second captive returned to Makkah and died as a infidel *(kāfir)*. [*"Asbābun Nuzūl,' p.64-66. "Rūhul Ma'āni, v.2, p .107*]

Allāh admonishes the Polytheists by saying that although fighting in the sacred months is sinful, they should first examine their own actions. They engaged in actions much worse than this by disbelieving in Allāh and preventing others from accepting Islām and from entering the Masjidul Harām. They also

wrongly expelled from the Masjidul Harām its residents and rightful upholders of its sanctity when they forced the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم to migrate to Madinah. [*'Qurtubi", v.3, p.46*]

"Corruption is worse than killing." The Polytheists of Makkah tortured and harassed the Muslims in an effort to revert them to idolatry. This was indeed a great form of corruption which far exceeds the killing of an individual during a sacred month which was not even conclusive.

Allāh then sounds a warning to the Muslims, saying, *"They* (the Infidels *(kuffār)) will continue to fight you until they turn you from your religion"* They will never be satisfied with your Belief *(Imān)* and will ceaselessly try to deviate you. Just as the Infidels *(kuffār)* are steadfast in their false religions, so too should the Muslim be equally steadfast in Islām. As they attempt to bring the Muslims into their religion, the Muslims should also try to convert them.

THE LAWS PERTAINING TO THE MURTAD *(APOSTATE)*

"Whosoever turns away from his religion, then dies in disbelief such people are the ones whose actions are lost in this world and in the Hereafter. These are the dwellers of the fire wherein they shall abide forever"

The person who after being a Muslim, turns to any other religion (all of which are regarded as infidelity *(Kufr)*), then all the actions that he carried out while still a Muslim will be considered to be lost. He will receive no reward for them in the Hereafter. Like the other Infidels *(kuffār)*, he shall be in the fire of Hell till eternity. Allāh says in Surah Mā'ida, *"Whoever rejects Imān, then verily his actions are lost and he will be amongst the losers in the Hereafter."* [*verse 5*]

The *(Murtad)* apostate should be spoken to, and all his doubts should be cleared. He will be given three days in which to decide his fate where after he will be put to death should he not revert to Islām. If a woman turns *(Murtad)* apostate, she will be imprisoned indefinitely until she reverts to Islām. She will also receive counselling and if she does not revert to Islām, she will be imprisoned for life. The above is in accordance to the religion *(Madh'hab)* of Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه. According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, the woman will also be put to death after three days.

All the wealth of a *(Murtad)* apostate will cease to belong to him. It will only be returned to him once he reverts to Islām. If he dies in this state of infidelity *(Kufr)*, or is killed due to his *'irtidād"* (apostasy), the wealth which he earned while still a Muslim will be distributed to his Muslim heirs. That wealth which he acquired as a *(Murtad)* apostate will be regarded as the wealth of "Fay" (i.e. it will be placed in the public treasury to be used for the needs of the general Muslim public). According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, both categories of his wealth will be regarded as Fay".

The *(Murtad)* apostate will be divorced from his wife immediately upon his apostasy. He will also be deprived of any inheritance that he is due to receive from another Muslim. Neither will the "Janāzah Salāh" (funeral prayer) be read for him, nor will he be buried in a Muslim cemetery. Any animal that he slaughters will now be considered unlawful *(harām)*. None of his good actions

such as fasting, Salāh, Hajj, Umrah etc. will bring him any rewards in the Hereafter.

If the *(Murtad)* apostate reverts to Islām, he will be saved from the eternal punishment of the Hereafter and will now be treated as a Muslim having all the responsibilities of Islām applicable to him. There exists a difference amongst the jurists concerning the rewards for good actions which were previously lost as well as with regard to the Hajj which was previously performed. According to Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, the rewards for all his actions cannot be recovered. The same applies to the Hajj which will have to be repeated. A new marriage will have to be contracted with the consent of the wife. She cannot be married to him against her wishes.

THE *(MURTAD)* APOSTATE IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE VERSE "THERE IS NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION"

The question may arise with regard to the *(Murtad)* apostate that the death threat given to him is a form of compulsion which contradicts the verse in Surah Baqarah, *"There is no compulsion in religion"* [verse 256]. In reality, this verse does not apply to the Murtad at all since it refers to the Infidels *(kuffār)* who have not yet accepted Islām. The person who has already accepted Islām has understood its concepts, derived benefit from its blessings and therefore has no alternative but to remain as a Muslim or suffer the death penalty. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who changes his religion should be put to death" [*"Bukhari," v.2, p. 1023*]

"Verily those who believe and migrate and strive" Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه writes [*v.1, p.254*] that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم extracted the "Khums" (1/5th) from the booty brought by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Jahash رضى الله عنه, he asked, "Oh the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, I wish that our expedition may be regarded as Jihād *(religious war)* and we receive the reward of the Mujāhidīn." The above verse was revealed on this occasion informing them that the believers who migrate and fight in Jihād *(religious war)* truly possess hope in Allāh's mercy. It is understood from this verse that entertaining such hopes are permissible and the error of these Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم was forgiven by Allāh.

LESSON: It is understood from the verse, *"Say, Warfare therein is a grave sin"*, that engaging in battle during the four sacred months is not permissible. This fact is also gathered from the following verse of Surah Barā. *"The number of months according to Allāh are twelve in His book, the day He created the heavens and the earth, four of which are sacred"* [*Surah 9, verse 36*]

There is a difference of opinion with regard to this prohibition. Sayyidina Atā bin Abi Rabah رحمة الله عليه states that this prohibition of warfare in the four months still stands, unless one is attacked. According to Sayyidina Sulaiman bin Yasār رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Saīd bin Musayib رحمة الله عليه this prohibition has been abrogated, making warfare permissible during these months. Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes that this second opinion is held by all the contemporary jurists. The verses, *"Fight the idolaters wherever you find them"* and *"Fight those who do not believe in Allāh nor the last day'* were revealed after the prohibition. [*"Ahkāmul*

Qur'ān", v.1, p.332]

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes in his tafsīr [*v.3, p.43*] that the jurists unanimously agree that the prohibition for fighting in the four sacred months has been abrogated. It will now be permissible to engage in war during these months. Sayyidina Zuhri رحمة الله عليه states that the above prohibition was abrogated by the verse, *'And fight the idolaters collectively"* [*Surah Taubah*]. Other Scholars *(Ulama)* say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself abrogated it when he fought the Bani Thaqif during a sacred month and dispatched the army of Sayyidina Abu Āmir Ash'ari رضى الله عنه to wage Jihād *(religious war)* in the valley of Autās. Therefore, fighting during these four months is permitted by all schools of thought - especially when fighting in self-defence.

۞ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْخَمْرِ وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ فِيهِمَآ إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَآ أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنفِقُونَ قُلِ ٱلْعَفْوَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ
ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿219﴾ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۗ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ
ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ ۖ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَإِن تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ ٱلْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿220﴾

(219) They question you about liquor and gambling. Say, "In both is great sin and some benefit for man; but the sin is far greater than their usefulness." And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say, "That which is extra." Thus Allāh makes clear to you His revelation so that you may reflect...... (220) Upon the world and the Hereafter. And they question you concerning orphans. Say, "To improve their lot is best" If you mingle your expenses with theirs, then they are your brothers. Allāh knows him who corrupts from him who improves. If Allāh wills He could overburden you. Allāh is Mighty, The Wise.

THE PROHIBITION OF LIQUOR AND GAMBLING

In these verse, Allāh begins by mentioning the law regarding liquor and gambling. Although both have some benefit, their harm and sin are greater. This teaches us that the benefit of a thing does not necessitate its lawfulness. A forbidden thing will remain such despite its usefulness, and earn its user destruction in both worlds. A detailed discussion regarding liquor and gambling will, Insha Allāh, take place in Surah Ma'idah under the verse, *"Oh you who believe, indeed liquor, gambling, idols and divining arrows are filth from the acts of Devil (Shaytān), so abstain there from so that you may be successful"* [*verse 90*]. For now it will suffice to understand that every form of intoxicant and gambling is unlawful (*harām*), irrespective of its method or name.

WHAT SHOULD BE SPENT IN THE PATH OF ALLĀH?

This question has already been discussed previously, but more emphasis was laid on the recipients of charity, viz, parents, relatives, orphans, beggars and wayfarers. In this verse under discussion, the actual wealth is discussed that has

to be spent. In *"Lubābun Nuqūl"* a narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه is recorded wherein he says that when Allāh instructed spending in charity, the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم what portion of their wealth should be spent. In reply to this question, this verse was revealed informing them to spend of that which is over and above their necessities.

"Thus Allāh makes clear to you His revelation so that you may reflect upon the world and the Hereafter." When spending, a person should consider well and reflect about the eventual outcome of his spending. He should gauge whether it will be of benefit to him in the Hereafter or not. He must also see that the excess wealth does not merely accumulate; at the same time he should not spend so much that it leaves him penniless and in need of other's charity. Another aspect to consider is that he should not be so generous to others that he neglects the needs of his own family.

After spending in all the obligations *(Fardh)* and compulsory *(Wājib)* ways, it will be permissible to save the leftover wealth. However, it is better to give this also in charity. Every person may utilise this wealth according to the level of his piety. One is also allowed to spend everything, as the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did by never keeping anything behind for the following day. After fulfilling one's necessities, a person is allowed to store something as was done by Sayyidina Uthman bin Affan and Abdur Rahman bin Auf رضی الله عنه. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم never prevented them from this in spite of knowing about it.

"And they ask you about the orphans." It is narrated in "Durrul Manthūr' (*v.1, p.355*), in an extract from Abu Dawūd and 'Mustadrak of Hākim, that Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه reported, 'When the verses like, *'Do not approach the wealth of the orphans except with grace,'* and *'Those who unlawfully consume the property of orphans fill their bellies with fire,'* were revealed, people who had orphans in their custody began to separate their food from the orphans in their charge so as not to be guilty of consuming their wealth. Whatever food was left over would be kept aside and, on many occasions became spoilt. When they approached the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم for further guidance in this matter, this verse was revealed.

The verse serves to explain that the actual purpose of caring for orphans is to improve their lot, by spending on them in their best interests. The person should not intend, by utilising the wealth of the orphan, that he or his children will gain. If their wealth is spent neither extravagantly, nor in a miserly manner, then Allāh will not take the guardian to task. All are brothers and should eat and drink together as such. Allāh knows exactly who intends good and who does not.

"If Allāh wills He could overburden you." If indeed Allāh so pleased, he could instruct a person to always cook separately for the orphans, not even allowing a slight bit of mixing in the food. This would have really complicated matters, so a person should be grateful to Allāh and practise His simplified injunctions, bearing the correct intention in mind.

"Verily Allāh is Mighty, The Wise." He is able to take anyone to task, while, at the same time, all His injunctions are filled with wisdom.

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ
وَلَا تُنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ ۚ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۖ وَيُبَيِّنُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿221﴾

(221) Do not marry idolatresses till they believe; for a believing slave is better than an idolatress even though she may be pleasing to you. And do not give your women in marriage to idolaters till they believe, for a believing slave is better than an idolater even though he may be pleasing to you. They invite towards the fire, while Allāh invites towards Heaven (Jannah) and forgiveness by His order; and He expounds His revelation to mankind so that they take heed.

THE PROHIBITION FROM MARRYING IDOLATERS AND IDOLATRESSES

This verse prohibits Muslim men from wedding polytheist *(Mushrik)* women unless they become Muslims. Many of these women are very attractive, thereby enticing men to marry them. However, it is better to marry a Muslim slave girl instead. The same applies to an idolater, with regard to whom a slave is better. If these people accept Islām, they are to be treated as any Muslim should be and one may marry them.

Thereafter, Allāh mentions the reason for not marrying such people. It is possible for them to mislead their Muslim spouses into disbelief, the ultimate end of which is the fire of Hell. They will also influence their children to do the same, thereby leading them also into the everlasting fire. This danger will not exist when the spouse is a Muslim even though s/he is a slave.

LESSON: The broad context of this verse makes it evident that no marital relations should exist between a Muslim and a polytheist, atheist, fire worshipper, etc. If such a marriage does take place, it will not be recognised in Islām, rendering all marital relations unlawful *(harām)*. The only exception exists in the case of a Muslim man marrying a Jewess or a Christian woman. Permission is granted for such a relationship in the beginning portion of Surah Ma'idah and this injunction shall be discussed there, Insha Allāh.

It is sufficient to understand that although this is allowed, nevertheless, it will be best to abstain, especially in these times when such women only marry Muslim men to turn them and their children away from Islām and to spy on them for the enemies. Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ, during his reign as caliphate *(khilāfah)*, prevented the Sahaba from taking such women into wedlock for the very same reason. [*"Kitābul Āthar" of Imām Muhammad bin Hasan Shaybani* رحمة الله عليه, *p.* 89]

Because of the system of co-education, it is all too common these days that Muslims marry non-Muslims in courts. If the marriage takes place with mutual consent, in the presence of at least two witnesses, then the marriage will be

recognised if the man is Muslim and the girl a Jewess or Christian. This will not be the case if she is a polytheist like a Hindu, Sikh or fire worshipper. On the other hand, if the girl is Muslim and the boy a non-Muslim, the marriage will not be recognized at all, even though he be a Jew or a Christian.

Marriage will also not be permitted with any person who, in spite of claiming to be a Muslim, holds certain beliefs of infidelity *(Kufr)*. Examples of these are those who deny the finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, those who say that the Qur'ān was adulterated as well as those who claim that Allāh is within their Imāms.

"Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p. 66*) records a report that a companion *(Sahabi)* by the name of Abu Marthad Ghanawi رضى الله عنه asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether he could marry an extremely beautiful polytheist *(Mushrik)* woman of the Quraish called Anāq. Upon this request, this verse was revealed.

It is also reported in the same book that once Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Rawaha رضى الله عنه angrily slapped a black slave woman he owned. He immediately regretted the incident and related it to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who enquired as to what type of a woman she was. He replied, 'Oh messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, she fasts regularly, performs her Salāh with proper ablution *(wudhu)* and testifies to the oneness of Allāh and your prophethood.' The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Oh Abdullāh, she is a Muslim." He exclaimed, "I swear by the Being Who sent you with the truth, I shall free her and take her as my wife!' True to his word, he did as he had expressed, but met with much scoffing (from others who preferred marriage to polytheist *(Mushrik)* women due to their beauty). It was on this occasion that this verse was revealed, which said, *"A believing slave is better than an idolatress even though she may be pleasing to you"*

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْمَحِيضِ ۖ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَٱعْتَزِلُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فِى ٱلْمَحِيضِ ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۖ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ (222)

(222) They ask you (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم concerning menstruation. Say, "It is impure so leave the women during menstruation and do not go unto them until they are cleansed. So when they have cleaned themselves properly, then go unto them whence Allāh has ordered you. Verily, Allāh, loves those who repent excessively and those who stay clean and pure."

THE INJUNCTIONS CONCERNING MENSTRUATING WOMEN

To develop the human race, Allāh created a special relationship between man and woman which is exercised after contracting marriage and then abiding by Allāh's ordained injunctions. Allāh also instilled the desire within both sexes that prompts them to reproduce. Allāh then imbibes the love between parents and children which allows for the nurturing and upbringing of the child. A

fundamental cog in this natural process of reproduction is the menstruation of women (*called Haidh or Mahīdh in Arabic*), which usually occurs in mature women on a monthly basis.

Certain special laws apply to menstruating woman. She shall neither fast nor perform Salāh during her menstruation cycle. She will not have to make up the missed Salāh, only the fasts. She cannot enter a Mosque *(Masjid)*, make Tawāf, recite the Qur'ān or touch it without an unattached cover.

Another related law is that her husband may not cohabit with her during this period as mentioned in the above verse, *'so leave the women during menstruation and do not go unto them until they are cleansed."* It is permissible to live, eat and drink with a menstruating woman, as well as derive pleasure from any part of her body except the portion between the navel and the knees. This is in contradiction to many other religions that preach total separation from menstruating women.

Sayyidah Aysha رضی الله عنها reports that, during her menstruation, she used to comb the hair of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, while, at times, he would even lie on her lap and recite the Qur'ān when she was in this condition. She also says that during her menstruation. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would instruct her to tie a cloth around her waist before sleeping with her. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.43/44*]

In a narration of Muslim (*v.1, p. 143*), Sayyidah Aysha رضی الله عنها says that during her menstruation, she would drink water from a cup where after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would drink from the same place. Similarly, she would bite off a bone then give it to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who would eat from the same place.

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه reports that it was customary for the Jews not to eat, drink, nor live with menstruating women. When the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم regarding this situation, the above verse was revealed. After this revelation, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them to do anything except indulge in sexual relations. Upon hearing this, the Jews said that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wished to contradict them in every action. When Sayyidina Usaid bin Hudair and Abbad bin Bishr رضی الله عنه heard this remark, they said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Since the Jews are saying this, should we rather not separate from our wives during their menstrual cycles?' On hearing this, the face of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed colour (indicating displeasure with their suggestion). [*v.1, p.143*]

All the above Ahādīth made it clear that the verse prohibits sexual relations and not general living relationships.

"So when they have cleaned themselves properly, then go unto them whence Allāh has ordered you.' This verse instructs that sexual relations take place only from the vaginal passage, thereby prohibiting anal sex.

"Verily Allāh loves those who repent excessively" This verse emphasises inner spiritual purification by means of repentance and abstinence from sin.

"(and Allāh loves) those who are clean and pure." Here all forms of physical

impurities are discouraged, whether they be on the clothing, the period of menstruation or satisfying one's passions in the impure organ of a menstruating women.

نِسَآؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ ۖ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُم مُّلَاقُوهُ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿223﴾

(223) Your women are a tilth unto you, so approach your tilth as you desire, and send (good deeds) ahead for yourselves. Fear Allāh and know that you will meet Him; and give glad tidings to the believers.

THE ABOMINATION OF ANAL SEX AND REFUTATION OF A JEWISH CONCEPT

Bukhari (*v.2, p.649*) records a hadith of Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه wherein he mentions the saying of the Jews that the child of that person will be squint who enters his wife's vagina from the rear. This verse refutes this conception of theirs, by declaring women to be the tilling fields of men, whom they may enter from any direction as long as it is in the correct passage. This verse also alludes to the fact that the purpose of conjugal relations is reproduction, as has passed in an earlier verse of Surah Baqarah viz. *"and seek what Allāh has decreed for you"*. This refers to seeking children, which is one of the objectives of marriage, along with the other objective of preserving one's chastity.

Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Marry such women who show a lot of love and are able to bear many children (which may be determined by seeing the other women of her family), because I will boast about your numbers on the Day of Judgment." [*Abu Dawūd, v.1, p.280*] From this it is also understood that family planning and birth control methods contradict the psychology of Islām.

The reference to enter one's tilth denotes that the woman may only be entered from that passage which will serve to produce children, since she would otherwise not be a productive field. This was the same thing mentioned in the previous verse where Allāh said, *"then go unto them whence ,Allāh has ordered you. Verily ,Allāh loves those who repent excessively and those who stay clean and pure."*

"So approach your tilth as you desire" Commentators mention that a clear prohibition was not issued regarding anal sex because of the disgusting and abominable nature of this action. However, this prohibition is perfectly understood from the mode of address.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'That person has refuted the religion brought by Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم who has intercourse with a menstruating woman or enters a woman from the anus or goes to a fortune teller." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh," p.56*]

"Durrul Manthūr' (*v.1 p.264*) reports a hadith from Abu Dawūd and Nasa'i wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said. "That person is cursed who satisfies his lust by the back passage of any man or woman.

It is also recorded in "Durrul Manthūr" that someone asked Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه about the person who enters his wife from her anus. He replied that only a infidel *(kāfir)* will do such a thing. This clearly shows that it is unlawful *(harām)* to sodomise one's wife, which is an action of the Infidels *(kuffār)*. This verse does not prohibit sexual intercourse in a standing or sitting posture.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said regarding this verse that it allows sexual intercourse from the front or the back as long as the correct passage is used, however it will not be permissible to have intercourse during menstruation.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه also reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Allāh will not look at the person who gratified his passions via the anus of another man or woman". [*Tirmidhi*]

"And Send (good deeds) ahead for yourselves. Fear Allāh and know that; you will meet Him" This verse includes every form of good and discourages the commission of all sins, be they major or minor. Thereafter, Allāh outlines the method whereby piety *(taqwa)* can be achieved by saying, *"And know that verily' you will meet Him"* The person who keeps this fact in mind will be able to live a life of piety and taqwa, resulting in *"Give glad tidings to the believers"*.

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِّأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٤﴾

(224) And do not make Allāh an obstacle for your oaths to do good, attain unto piety and foster good relations between people. Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing.

OATHS SHOULD NOT BE A MEANS OF EVADING PIETY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is reported in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.72*) that this verse was revealed with regard to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Rawāha رضى الله عنه when he took an oath not to visit, speak, nor mend ties between his sister'and brother-in-law, when a dispute arose between the couple. In "Durrul Manthūr" [*v.1, p.268*], Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that this verse was revealed concerning some people who used to take oaths not to carry out certain righteous deeds.

When an oath is taken, it should be to do a good action. It is not permissible to take an oath to do any sinful act nor to refrain from any good act. Many people take sinful oaths such as swearing not to visit a certain relative, or not to accept a particular Muslim's invitation or not to perform Salāh in congregation. This verse informs such people not to make Allāh's name an obstacle for doing good actions because, by taking such oaths, they will not carry out certain good deeds saying that they had sworn not to do so. Oaths are not meant to avert good deeds. Therefore, any person making such sinful oaths should break them and pay the due Kaffāra (*expiation*).

Sayyidina Auf bin Mālik رضى الله عنه says that he once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "I have a cousin who once refused to help me in my need, and did not wish to maintain our ties of kinship. Later, he came to me requesting some assistance but I had already taken an oath not to help him, nor to promote ties of kinship between us. What do you advise me to do?" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him to assist the cousin and pay the due expiation *(Kaffāra)* for breaking his oath. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh", p.297*]

Allāh says in Surah Nūr, *'The pious and wealthy amongst you should not take oaths to refuse relatives, needy and immigrants in Allāh 's path; but should forgive and overlook Do you not desire that Allāh forgives you? And Allāh is the All Hearing, All Knowing"* [*verse* 22]. This verse was revealed when Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, on account of some misdemeanour, took an oath not to spend on his nephew whom he had being assisting previously.

Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Samurah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'When any of you take an oath, then realise that doing the opposite is better, he should break the oath and pay the expiation *(Kaffāra)*. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh, Pg.296 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

لَّا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِٱللَّغْوِ فِيٓ أَيْمَٰنِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿225﴾

(225) Allāh, will not take you to task for your futile oaths but will try you for that which your hearts intend Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Clement.

THE LAWS AND TYPE OF OATHS

Oaths are of three types: The first type, called 'Ghamūs", occurs when a person takes a false oath regarding an action of the past e.g. He swears that he had done a certain action whereas he did not, or vice versa. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in a narration of Bukhari, 'Major sins are Polytheism *(shirk)*, disobedience to parents, murder and the 'ghamūs' oath" [*"Mishkātul Masābīh', p.17*]. The word ghamūs is derived from the root word 'ghams' which means the complete merging of one thing into another. Certain scholars explain that this particular term is used because such a false oath will cause a person to be submerged in Hell.

The second type of oath, called *"Mun'aqida"*, is when a person takes an oath concerning some future action e.g. He swears that he will do a certain action, or will not do some action. By breaking such an oath, expiation *(Kaffāra)* will be compulsory *(Wājib)*, as is mentioned in Surah Māida. The details regarding the expiation *(Kaffāra)* will Insha-Allāh be mentioned there.

The third type is when a person takes an oath concerning a past action, being convinced of its truth, whereas it never occurred. This is called 'Laghw' (futile oath). The above verse makes reference to this type of oath regarding which a person will not be answerable.

According to Sayyidah Aysha رضی الله عنها the futile oath is that which is used in common dialogue e.g. 'Wallāh' (Words which are not intended as oaths but resemble them). [*Bukhari, v.2, p.986*]

The verse concludes with the statement that Allāh is Most Forgiving and Clement since He will not require a person to render any account for these unintentional utterances.

لِّلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِّسَآئِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِن فَآءُو فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿226﴾ وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا۟ ٱلطَّلَٰقَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿227﴾

(226) Those who swear not to go near their wives should wait four months. Then if they retract, then verily Allāh is Mast Forgiving, Most Merciful. (227) If they resolve to divorce then verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing.

THE OATH NOT TO GO TO ONE'S WIFE

There are several laws in Shari'ah with regard to a person who takes an oath not to cohabit with his wife. If he does not stipulate a time for this oath,- it will be termed 'eela', meaning that if he does not cohabit with her within four months; then a 'Bā'in' divorce will take place. This means that he will not be able to take her back in marriage without her consent and without contracting a new marriage ceremony. The same law will apply if he swears not to have intercourse with her for a period of four months or more (even if he swears not to do so for the rest of his life). In the above circumstances, if he does cohabit with his wife, the oath will be broken and she will not be divorced from him. However, the due expiation *(Wājib Kafāra)* will have to be paid - which is mentioned in Surah Māida.

If he takes an oath not to cohabit with her for a period less than four months, the law will be different. Should he cohabit within the stipulated period, expiation *(Kaffāra)* will have to be paid and she will not be divorced. However, if he fulfilled his oath, there will neither be any expiation *(Kaffāra)* due from him nor will his wife be divorced from him.

FIRST LESSON: The "eela' will expire when the person cohabits with his wife, which entails a practical retraction of the oath. However, if this is not possible due to either party being ill or the wife being a minor, he may verbally retract his oath within the stipulated period. However, if cohabitation becomes possible within this period, the verbal retraction will no longer be valid. It will now be imperative that he cohabits with her, failing which she would be divorced from him.

SECOND LESSON: If a person swore never to cohabit with his wife and then divorced her, the oath will still apply. This means that if he marries her again, he will not be able to cohabit with her until he breaks this oath and pays the expiation *(Kaffāra)*.

THIRD LESSON: The four months stipulated in the above laws will be calculated with the lunar calendar only.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports in a narration of *"Asbābun Nuzūl"* [*p.72*] that 'eea' took place for periods of a year and more during the period of ignorance. Allāh restricted this period to four months. Therefore, any period less than four months will not be termed 'eela' and if the oath is not broken within four months, the divorce will be pronounced.

Sayyidina Saīd bin Musayib رحمة الله عليه says that people during the time of ignorance would exasperate their wives by using the system of Īla. A person who neither desired to keep his wife, nor wanted anyone else to marry her, would take an oath to never cohabit with her. In this way she had to spend her life without being married, nor unmarried. Allāh then restricted this period of Īla by revealing the above verse. [*'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl', v.1 - p.202*]

وَالْمُطَلَّقَٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَٰثَةَ قُرُوٓءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَن يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِىٓ أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِن كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْءَاخِرِ ۚ وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوٓا۟ إِصْلَٰحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿228﴾

(228) Divorced women should wait for three (menstrual) courses. It is not lawful for them to conceal that which Allāh has created in their wombs if, indeed, they believe in Allāh and the last Day. Their husbands are most deserving to take them back within this period, if they desire reconciliation. And they (women) have rights similar to those (that men have) over them in kindness; and men are a degree above them, Allāh is Mighty, The Wise.

THE WAITING PERIOD (IDDAH) OF DIVORCED WOMEN

Allāh ordained the institution of Nikāh *(marriage)* because men and women are mutually dependent on each other, deriving solace from each other. They live intimately with each other, making a life together. Whenever any unpleasant incident occurs, they overlook it and continue with their lives. However, occasions do arise which are irreconcilable and it may also occur that the two simply cannot live together. In this situation, Allāh has allowed the options of divorce *("Talāq")* and 'Khula' *(divorce obtained on wife's initiative).*

Many religions, though permitting marriage, do not recognise divorce. They scorn and jeer at Islām, but after being forced into certain situations, they have themselves included it into their religions. Since they have themselves included it in their faiths, they perpetrate many excesses and deficiencies in the matter.

Although Islām encourages and promotes mutual love and affection between the couple, it does not force them to strain such a relationship by pretence when the two cannot be reconciled.

One of the many laws governing the divorce is the waiting period afterwards, during which time the divorced woman cannot marry another man. This is referred to as the "Iddah which literally means 'to count.' This word is used since she will have to count the months or menstrual periods to determine

its expiry. These verses, as well as the opening few of Surah Talāq, discuss the various laws of divorce.

If the divorced woman is expecting at the time of her divorce, her Iddah will expire upon the birth of the child, as stated in verse 4 of Surah Talāq, "The term of the expectant woman is the delivery of her child.'

If she is not expecting, her Iddah will expire after three months if she experiences no menstrual cycle (due to young age, menopause or some other cause). This is explained in the following verse of Surah Talāq, *"The waiting period is three months for those of your women who have no hope of menstruating or have never menstruated."* [*Surah 65, verse 4*]

With regard to those women who are not expecting but do menstruate, they will have to wait till the completion of three menstrual cycles before terminating their Iddah, irrespective of the time this takes. When a person divorces his wife during her non-menstrual period (called Tuhr - it is forbidden to divorce a woman during her menstrual cycle), she will then await her next menstrual cycle. After this has expired, she will then pass another two periods of purity (*tuhr*), whereafter the third menstrual cycle will be her last. This will signal the expiry of her Iddah.

The determination of this Iddah will be the sole responsibility of the woman since none other can determine whether she is expecting or not nor when her menstrual cycles occur. For this reason, she has to be honest in the matter. A dishonest woman may claim that she is neither expecting, nor capable of menstruating if she knows that these conditions will lengthen her Iddah. Similarly, she may lie concerning the length of her menstrual cycles to shorten her Iddah. Such behaviour is forbidden as stated in the verse under discussion, *"It is not lawful for them to conceal that which Allāh has created in their wombs if indeed, they believe in Allāh and the Last Day."*

A person who is conscious of his pending presence before Allāh, Who is aware of every action, will be imbued with the quality of honesty and trustworthiness, and therefore will never speak a lie.

"Their husbands are most deserving to take them Back within this period, If they desire reconciliation]' The person who pronounces two clear divorces will reserve the right to take his wife back within the Iddah without contracting another marriage. Such a divorce is termed 'Raj'ī', but will become "Bā'in" should he not take her back within the Iddah. In such a case (*Bā'in*), a new marriage will have to be contracted with her prior consent.

The divorce pronounced in this way (clearly) before consummation of the marriage will not be Raj'ī but Bā'in. If a man chooses to take his wife back within the Iddah, none should revile him nor attempt to dissuade him. On the other hand, all efforts should be made to reconcile the couple. It will be best if all parties involved are pleased with the reconciliation even though the man reserves the sole right to take her back if he wishes. When doing so, his intention should also be amicable and with a sincere view to reconcile, as Allāh states, *"if they desire reconciliation."*

Many men merely take their wives back to vent their rage and thereafter fail

to fulfil their rights while, at the same time, not divorcing them. This is done to spite the woman and prolong her suffering. Others divorce their wives merely to place them into lengthy Iddah, then take them back without any intention of making her life better. Such practices are not permissible and un-Islāmic.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLĀM

'And they (women) have rights similar to those (that men have) over them in kindness" This verse makes it evident that not only do women owe certain rights to men, but men also owe rights to women. It is in total contradiction of Islāmic teachings if a man pays no heed to the needs and rights of his wife.

The plight of women prior to the advent of Islām was indeed a pitiful one. Even after the passage of time, the status accorded to women by Islām is unparalleled. The idolaters of India used to burn alive the woman whose husband had died, while no religion accorded a share of inheritance for women. During the period of ignorance, a woman was regarded as a mere commodity who had to serve her husband, possessing no wealth of her own. Upon the death of her husband, she became the property of his heirs, who would marry her off to whomsoever they pleased. It often occurred that, in this instance, men would marry their own stepmothers. Infant girls were buried alive or killed at birth.

Islām accorded to the woman her rightful status, while at the same time, not placing her upon the same standing of a man. She now ceased being a mere object of utility, enjoying a rank of her own. She became the queen of her home, the revered mother and beloved jewel of her husband. She was also the rightful heir to the estates of relatives, possessing complete authority to utilise her wealth lawfully as she pleases without her husband's interference. Together with her share of inheritance, she also reserves the right to stipulate her dowry which will be her sole property.

Islām has also emphasised the maintenance of family ties which no Muslim can overlook. These must be fostered with a person's mother, sister, aunt and all other relatives irrespective of their gender. The husband has to treat his wife well, providing for all her needs and requirements, just as children must behave respectfully towards their mothers, according them their due honour. It has thus elevated the status of women to an exclusive level.

THE LACK OF CHASTITY AMONG THE MAJORITY OF WESTERN WOMEN

In the western society, women have been robbed of their chastity, and kept merely for the carnal gratification of men. Women are not only deprived of their inheritance and dowry, but marriage itself is scorned upon and considered a defect. Couples live together for years without contracting a formal marriage fulfilling all their desires within their relationship. Some do eventually marry but their children are already illegitimate.

The result of such relationships is that the mother often ends up with the responsibility of bringing up the children, the natural consequence of which is her entry into the labour market. Consequently, she sheds all her feminine innocence and purity to either shine the shoes of passing men, stand behind a

shop counter, or adorn herself in provocative attire to attract business to sell some commodity.

It is indeed unfortunate that some of our so-called Muslims are also enamoured by this feminist 'freedom.' They prefer their women to doll up in promiscuous outfits and parade the malls and marketplaces. Even worse is the fact that these unenlightened ladies consider this debasing behaviour to be a source of pride.

It is regrettable that today's woman fails to perceive that it is best for her to ascend to the position of a queen in her own home, demanding the respect and honour of her family. In this way, she shall receive income from her husband, her inheritance, and still reserve the care and attention of her husband for herself She will also be able to spend her wealth as she pleases.

In the western world, a woman is not considered to owe any rights to anyone. Therefore, she cannot expect anyone to fulfill her rights either. The so-called rights they demand are not really rights at all, but are only to her detriment. In these western countries where adultery is rife, thousands of children are without any family, leading lives of utter solitude and loneliness. What is ironic is the fact that these people claim to grant rights to women while they feel not the slightest guilt to murder and plunder women and children in their wars and aggressions against others.

THE STATUS OF MEN OVER WOMEN

"And men are a degree above them." This verse outlines the fact that although men and women share mutual responsibilities and rights owing to each other, men possess superiority over women. This is further elucidated by the following verse in Surah Nisā, *"Men are the overseers of women by virtue of the fact that Allāh accords superiority of some over others, and because man spends from his wealth. "* [*Surah 4, verse 34*]

Allāh has placed the responsibility of maintenance upon the man as well as accorded him the privilege of exercising authority over women. For this reason, she has to obey him in domestic, religious and social matters. Without this, The system of marriage cannot function. At the same time, man has not been vested the authority to oppress her, nor waive her rights or destroy her wealth. The woman should understand that the husband is her leader, while the man should think that Allāh has blessed him with the custody of a woman to aid him in this life. He must then make every effort to be cordial and polite to her, seeing to her every need. In this way the lives of parents and children will be comfortable and good. Allāh says in another verse, *"and live with' them (women) in a most amicable manner."* This instruction includes all forms of polite behaviour, keeping her rights and needs in mind.

Since man has been given the position of superiority, he should endure all the woman's failings, otherwise what is the purpose of this rank? the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A believing man should not harbour enmity for his wife due to some flaw in her. If he dislikes something in her, he may very well like some other quality of hers." [*Muslim, v.1, p.475*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best of you is the one who is best unto his wife, and I am the best unto my wives." [*Ibn Majah, p. 142*]

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The people with the most perfect Belief *(Imān)* are those who possess the best morals and behave most compassionately towards their wives." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh," v.2, p.284*]

"And Allāh is Mighty, The Wise." This verse serves to remind one that no person should think that he will not be taken to task for transgressing Allāh's laws. None can escape His justice since He is the Almighty and Powerful. At the same time, all His injunctions are replete with wisdom and in conformity with man's needs and abilities. No other mode of living can supersede that which issues from Him.

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا
مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ
اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ
اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (229) فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا
غَيْرَهُ ۗ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ
حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (230)

(229) Divorce is pronounced twice whereafter (the woman) is either retained in good faith or released in kindness. It is not permissible for you to take anything from what you have given them except (in the case when both fear that they will not be able to keep within the limits imposed by Allāh. If you fear that they will not be able to keep within the limits of Allāh, then there shall be no sin for either of them should the woman ransom herself. These are the limits imposed by Allāh, so transgress them not, for those who transgress Allāh 's limits are indeed the oppressors. (230)If he had divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she weds another husband. Then if he (the other husband) divorces her, there shall be no sin upon either of the couple that they return unto each other if they consider that they are able to observe the limits set by Allāh. These are the limits of Allāh which He manifests for those who have knowledge.

SOME LAWS OF DIVORCE AND KHUL'A

The best way to divorce a woman, if the need to do so is pressing, is to pronounce one unambiguous divorce during a period of "Tuhr" (when a woman is not menstruating) in which no sexual contact was made. This will be considered a "Raj'ī" divorce if the marriage was consummated (otherwise it would be Bā'in). This will, however, become Bā'in once the Iddah has expired. A Bā'in divorce would mean that he will lose the right to take her back into his

wedlock without her consent (i.e. her consent and a new marriage contract is imperative before remarriage.) The same will apply if he pronounced another clear divorce before the expiry of this Iddah.

If he issues a third divorce it will now be termed Mughallaza, meaning that he cannot ever wed her again unless she is married to another person and consummates the marriage, whereafter he dies or divorces her, and she completes her Iddah. If this subsequent marriage is not consummated, she can still not be married to the previous husband, as is clearly stated in the Ahādīth. It is Makrūh Tahrimi {close to unlawful *(harām)*} for an agreement to be reached between a couple to marry, consummate the marriage and then be divorced. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has cursed such people. [*Ibn Majah and Hakim, v.2, p.199*]

The most despised Lawful *(halāl)* action in the sight of Allāh is divorce, as reported in a hadith of Abu Dawūd (*v.2, p.296*). Divorce has been disallowed during the menstruation since this is a period wherein a man is disinclined towards his wife. All of this is in keeping with the temperament and welfare of the human. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once instructed Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه to take back his wife after divorcing her during her menstrual cycle. She could only be divorced when she was pure or expecting. [*Muslim, v.1, p.476*]

According to a narration of Bukhari (*v.2 p.803*) the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed him to retract the divorce and pronounce another during the Tuhr. This, he added, should be before any intercourse takes place.

One should only issue a divorce after much deliberation. Then too, if it is deemed absolutely necessary, it must be done thoughtfully, during the man wherein no sexual relations transpired. If one truly ponders over all these injunctions, it will be realised that the welfare of man has been accommodated throughout. Should a person, in contravention of Allāh's laws, pronounce three divorces (either collectively or separately), he will have to suffer the pain of having his wife married to and 'used by another man before having her back.

Although the right of divorce rests with the man, a woman has not been deprived of securing a divorce should the situation warrant it. This may be achieved through the agency of Khul'a, whereby she offers to pay him a stipulated sum in exchange of a divorce. If he agrees, payment will be due from her and a Bā'in divorce will come into effect. This does not mean that she is able to divorce herself from him, nor can she do so in a court without a reason that the Shari'ah regards as valid. In certain extreme circumstances it is possible that a Muslim judge or ruler revokes a marriage upon the woman's plea. Details of this are to be found in the books of Islāmic Law *(Fiqh)*. However, it should be borne in mind that no Muslim couple can be separated by a infidel *(kāfir)*, irrespective of the circumstances.

If a couple, despite all efforts, cannot reconcile and they feel that by remaining together, the laws and limits of Allāh will be transgressed, they may opt for Khul'a. If the man was at fault, he should issue the divorce without accepting any recompense. If, on the other hand, the wife was in the wrong, the husband may only accept a maximum of that amount which equals her dowry. If he demands more, the Khul'a will be valid, but he will be guilty of a great sin for

perpetrating an act which is detestable or reprehensible *(Makrūh)*.

The wife of Sayyidina Thabit bin Qais رضی الله عنه once told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "I have no qualms with regard to Thabits character and piety, but I detest showing ingratitude as a Muslim (therefore I wish to be separated from him since I cannot live with him)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked, "Do you consent to returning the orchard (which was given in dowry to you)?" She agreed, whereupon the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed Sayyidina Thabit رضی الله عنه to accept the orchard and pronounce a divorce. [*Bukhari, v.2, p.794*]

This hadith clearly expounds the legality of Khul'a and further elucidates the fact that it should be practiced only as a last option.

Ruling : By merely using the word Khul'a with the husband's consequent acceptance, a divorce will be enforced, where after the woman should remain in Iddah. Another type of divorce called "Talāq Bil Māl" may also be implemented whereby the husband proposes to issue a divorce upon a specified sum. If the wife accepts, a Bā'in divorce shall apply, and she will have to pay the amount.

Note: In the above two verses, mention is first made of two Raj'ī divorces, then Khul'a. Next Allāh mentions another divorce which is irrevocable. When Allāh says, "If he had divorced her then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she weds another husband," reference is made to the third divorce and not a fourth. The one mentioned in between was merely coincidental.

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا۟ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُۥ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ هُزُوًا وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (231)

(231) When you divorce women, and they reach their term (Iddah), then retain them in kindness or release them in kindness. Do not retain then; to hurt them and transgress the limits set by Allāh, for whoever does so, has verily oppressed his own soul. Make not the revelations of Allāh a joke; and recall the bounty of Allāh upon you and the scripture and wisdom which He has revealed to you, exhorting you thereby. Fear Allāh and know that surely Allāh is Aware of every thing.

THE PROHIBITION TO HURT DIVORCED WOMEN

This verse emphasises that a divorced woman should be allowed to continue with her life once the Iddah has expired if the husband does not wish to take her back. He should not hurt her by taking her back just before its expiry, then issue a second divorce to confine her to another Iddah. A Sahabi of the Ansār did such a thing, thereby extending the woman's Iddah to nine months. This verse was then revealed saying, *"retain them in kindness or release them in kindness."*

Besides this instruction, Allāh mentions further, *"Do not retain them to hurt them and transgress the limits set by Allāh for whoever does so, has verily oppressed his own soul"* Such a person has done a great injustice to himself because by hurting a believing woman he has earned himself the due punishment and deprived himself of rewards.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'That person is accursed who hurt a Believer *(Mu'min)*, or assisted in the scheme to do so." [*Tirmidhi*]

MAKING A JOKE OF ALLĀH'S REVELATION

"Make not the revelations of Allāh a joke." It should not be that a person practises Allāh's injunctions when he wishes, then disregards them at other times. Every order should be strictly adhered to at all times.

Sayyidina Mahmūd bin Labīd رضى الله عنه narrates that once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was informed about a person who pronounced three divorces at once. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood up in anger and said, "Do people play with the book of Allāh while I am still in your midst?" Seeing the magnitude of his fury, a Sahabi enquired, "Should I not kill this person?" [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 184*]

Pronouncing three collective divorces is prohibited in Islām. A person may only issue three if each is pronounced in a separate tuhr. It is reported in the 'Muatta" that a person once asked Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه what he had to say about the fact that he had given his wife a hundred divorces. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه replied, "You divorced her with three, but made a mockery of Allāh's book with the other 97." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh", p. 284*]

RECALL THE BOUNTIES OF ALLĀH

"And recall the bounty of Allāh upon you and the scripture and wisdom which He has revealed to you." Recalling Allāh's bounty refers to showing gratitude for them and not utilising them in sinful acts. All His orders must be implemented, for within them lie great wisdom and benefit.

"Exhorting you thereby." A person should take heed of whatever has been revealed and not ignore anything.

"Fear Allāh and know that surely Allāh is aware of everything." He is aware of every action of man and will accord the rightful rewards or chastisement. He is fully conscious of where man's goodwill and prosperity lies, so every effort should be made to enact His commands, thereby averting destruction.

Lesson: Divorce will be valid even if pronounced in jest. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Three things are such that shall be deemed serious whether they be earnest or in jest; marriage, divorce and taking back (of the divorcee)." [*"Tirmidhi ",v .1, p.191 and "Hākim" v.2, p.198*]

Lesson: *"Make not the revelation of Allāh a joke."* Although this was specifically revealed in connection with divorce, its broad context permits application to any situation where Allāh's laws and verses are mocked or jeered at. The gravity of the sin is just as great, whereas if such an act is deliberately perpetrated, it will constitute infidelity *(Kufr)*. Allāh addresses the Believers in

Surah Mā'idah, *"Oh you who believe, do not take as friends those who have received the Book before you and the disbelievers, who make a mockery and sport of your Dīn (religion). Fear Allāh you are believers. When you call them to Salāh they make a mockery and sport thereof. That is because they are a nation who do not understand."* [*verses 57 and 58*]

In the discussion of those to dwell in Hell, Allāh says in Surah Jāthiyah, *"This (punishment) is because you made a jest of Allāh's revelation, and the worldly life beguiled you."* [*verse 35*]

Despite their claims to Islām, many people jeer at the Qur'ān, Ahādīth and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Islām totally absolves itself from such people. Many think that they are doing a service to Islām by carrying out outrageous actions such as filming the Hajj and its various rites. They portray the numerous scenes at the Ka'ba, the black stone, Mina, etc, thinking that these are invitations to Islām, while in reality they amount to no more than amusement and entertainment. Such sinful photography and cinematic coverage taint these actions of virtue.

In such absurd dramas the noble Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم are portrayed without beards and with overgrown moustaches which is a total mockery of these great personalities. Gatherings of Qirā'ah are televised with the photographs of the readers spread all over newspaper pages. In the name of the Qur'ān, photography is given precedence. All of this is screened in universities and colleges as Islāmic subject matter, where girls and boys view them sitting side by side. During such Islāmic sessions, the very injunctions of Islām are violated. Banks sporting Islāmic names are involved in interest transactions, while people use unlawful *(harām)* wealth for Hajj, Umrah and for conveying rewards to the deceased. All this is tantamount to the making of Allāh's revelation a joke and game.

People do not even perceive these grave sins, and continue mocking at those adhering to the Sunnah. The worst part of this is that these taunts stem from the very ones who claim to be Muslims. May Allāh grant them all the proper understanding. Amīn.

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَن يَنكِحْنَ أَزْوَٰجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَٰضَوْا۟ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِۦ مَن كَانَ مِنكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿232﴾

(232) When you divorce (your) wives and they reach their terms, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if it is agreed between them in good faith. This is an admonition for him amongst you who believes in Allāh and the Last Day. This is purer for you and cleaner. Allāh knows and you know not.

DIVORCEES MAY NOT BE PREVENTED FROM REMARRYING THEIR PREVIOUS HUSBANDS IF THEY WISH TO DO SO

This instruction contained in this verse is directed specifically at the family

and guardians of the divorced woman. Once she has completed her Iddah, the divorce becomes Bā'in, thereby allowing her to marry any person she desires, even if it may be her former husband. It may occur that a man divorces his wife at the spur of the moment when enraged or, on the other hand, she may ask for a divorce in a moment of fury. Later, when they reflect upon the situation; they realise that it was only a minor incident and that they will be able to live together again quite amicably. However, the father, brother or other relatives of the woman consider her return to the husband an insult to them and try to prevent this reconciliation. At times, it has also occurred that they wish to extort money from him to remarry. Such behaviour is strongly criticised in this verse.

Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضی الله عنه narrates that this verse was revealed with reference to him. He explains that he had married his sister to a person who later divorced her. After the expiry of her Iddah, the same person came with a proposal to remarry her. Sayyidina Ma'qal رضی الله عنه told him that he had married her to him upon the previous occasion, sent her to live with him and she served him, but only to be divorced. He then took an oath never to marry her to him even though the man was suitable and the woman was prepared to return. On this occasion, the above verse was revealed. Sayyidina Ma'qal رضی الله عنه then went to the Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and told him that he intended to comply to the instruction in the verse. Consequently, he married the couple and paid the Kaffara *(expiation for the breach of an oath)*. Another narration adds that upon the revelation of this verse, Sayyidina Ma'qal رضی الله عنه said. "I hear the instruction of my Lord and I obey!" [*"Durrul Manthūr", v.1, p.287 from Bukhari, Abu Dawūd, Tirmidhi, Hākim and others*]

Some commentators maintain that the verse also refers to the marriage of such women to other men besides their previous husbands. Should she wish to marry any such man, then too her relatives, as well as the former husband should not pose as obstacles to the intended marriage. The verse contains the clause of *"in good faith"* meaning that this intended marriage be in conformity with the Shari'ah. If it is contrary to this, it will be compulsory for another party to prevent its occurrence. The woman should ensure that the next husband is suitable in all respects so as not to invoke any objections from her family.

"This is an admonition for him amongst you who believes in Allāh and the Last Day. This is purer for you and cleaner. Allāh knows and you know' not." Acting contrary to Allāh's laws creates strife and distress which lead to the commission of sins and robbing Muslim men and women of their honour and chastity. People may think that they know what is good for them when, in reality, their sense of Judgment is erroneous. They may only view the matter from an angle of piety and overlook human emotions, leading to many complications. Therefore one should follow that which is ordained by Allāh, Who knows everything.

۞ وَٱلْوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلْمَوْلُودِ
لَهُۥ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَآرَّ وَٰلِدَةٌۢ بِوَلَدِهَا

وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَٰلِكَ ۗ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ وَإِنْ أَرَدتُّمْ أَن تَسْتَرْضِعُوٓا۟ أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُم مَّآ ءَاتَيْتُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿233﴾

(233) Mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those who wish to complete the suckling. The duty of feeding and clothing the nursing mothers in a seemly manner rests with the father of the child. None are charged beyond their capacity. A mother should not be made to suffer because of her child, nor should the one to whom the child is born (be made to suffer) because of his chilled On the heir is incumbent the like thereof If the couple decide to wean the child by mutual consent and consultation, there shall be no sin upon either of them. If you wish to give your children out to nurse, there is no sin on you provided you pay what is due from you according to the norm. Fear Allāh and know that most definitely He sees what you do.

THE LAWS OF SUCKLING

When children are born to a couple living amicably, each of them has strong loving emotions for the child, displaying every concern to attend to the upbringing and comfort of the child. The mother therefore tends to suckling without demanding remuneration. According to Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه it is not even proper for the mother to request payment if she is being provided for by the father.

When a divorce takes place, the first question to arise is the custody of the child. The ruling in this case is that the mother retains custody of boys until they reach the age of seven and girls until they turn nine. It should be borne in mind that she shall lose this right to custody if she marries a man who is not the close relatives *(Mahram)* of the child. While the children are in her custody, it will still be obligatory for the biological father to provide for them.

If the child is still being suckled when the divorce takes place, the mother cannot claim remuneration for breastfeeding during the Iddah because the husband will be supporting her for this duration. Once the Iddah expires, she may claim payment until he child is two. Up to this age, the father will have to pay for the maintenance and expenses of the child as well. When the child turns two, the father will no longer be liable for the suckling but will still have to support the child.

According to Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, the maximum duration for breastfeeding is two and a half years, while the other Scholars *(Imāms)* restrict it to two. Therefore, if a woman suckles her child for more than two years (but less than two and a half, she will not be entitled to remuneration for the extended period. However, such a child can still not many those who were suckled by the same nursing mother during the period after two years. This is so because, in the matters of marriage, added caution is exercised.

THE MOTHER AND FATHER MAY NOT BE MADE TO SUFFER BECAUSE OF THEIR CHILDREN

"None are charged beyond their capacity." This verse advises suckling mothers not to demand as payment more than what their former husbands can afford.

"A mother should not be made to suffer because of her child, nor should the one to whom the child is born (be made to suffer) because of his child.' Once the divorce has taken place, the couple should desist from causing undue suffering to each other. If the mother is, for some reason, incapable of suckling the child and wishes to be excused from the task, the father should not force her, neither should he coerce her' into suckling for free if she requires remuneration. In no way should he unduly exploit her maternal affection for ulterior motives. By the same token, if she is prepared to suckle the child, it will be wrong for him to give the child over to another woman out of spite.

"On the heir is incumbent the like thereof" This verse implies that if the father dies, the responsibility of caring for the child will fall squarely on the heir's shoulders. If the child inherits some wealth, all the expenses of this child shall be paid from the inheritance. If on the contrary, the child possesses no wealth of his own, the heirs will have to spend from their own wealth to defray expenses.

According to Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, the heirs referred to are those of the child (those who shall inherit from the child should the child die), as well as the *(Mahram)* close relatives of the child. If a single person fits into both these categories, he will have to support the child single-handedly. If there are many such heirs, they shall share the expenses in relation to their respective allotted shares of the estate.

A *(Mahram)* close relative is that person to whom one may not be married. If both people are of the same gender, the relationship of being a *(Mahram)* close relative can be established by assuming either one to be of the opposite gender. If, after this assumption, it is concluded that the two cannot marry, they will be deemed to be *(Mahram)* close relative to each other. For example, an uncle cannot marry his niece, therefore he will also be regarded as a *(Mahram)* close relative to his nephew.

Ruling: Suppose a father dies, leaving nothing for his infant son to subsist upon, and the only heirs of the child are his mother and his paternal grandfather. According to their respective shares to this child's estate, the mother will have to contribute towards one third of the child's expenses, while the remaining two thirds will be borne by the grandfather.

A CHILD MAY BE WEANED OFF BREASTMILK BEFORE TWO YEARS BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT

"If the couple decide to wean the child (before two years) by mutual consent and consultation, there shall be no sin upon either of them." This should be done with the welfare of the child as priority. This may be done if, for example, the mother's milk dries up or becomes infected and the child refuses to suckle by another woman. It may also occur that the child stops suckling on his own. It will be permissible to wean the child in all such circumstances where the welfare of the

child may be adversely affected by suckling.

THE LAWS OF PAYING FOR SUCKLING

"If you wish to give your children out to nurse, there is no sin on you provided you pay what is due from you according to the norm". Keeping the well being of the child in mind, if the couple decide to hire a wet nurse, there will no prohibition from the Shari'ah. However, if the mother wishes to suckle the child after her Iddah as well, but at a fee, the father will have no right to take the child away from her to hand over to another wet nurse. He may only do so if the mother demands a fee that is exorbitant in comparison to the wet nurse or her (the mother's) milk has become contaminated due to illness.

Ruling : Even though another woman suckles the child, the mother reserves the right to care for the child during the interim period. The father is obliged to make the necessary arrangements for this purpose.

Ruling : The wage paid to the nursing mother should be a fair one and must be paid in full on the stipulated time without delay. This is implied in the verse, *'you pay what is due from you according to the norm.*

Ruling: If any other service is required from the wet nurse in addition to suckling, then it should be stipulated in the contract.

Ruling: A wet nurse may be employed with the stipulation of food and clothing as wages, but this must be clearly defined. No other employee may be employed on this basis.

"Fear Allāh and know that most definitely He sees what you do." It should always be borne in mind that no action goes unnoticed by Allāh. Any contravention to His laws, be they concerning suckling or anything else, will deserve His wrath and punishment.

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَٰجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا ۖ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿234﴾

(234) Those of you who die, leaving their wives behind, then they (the wives) shall remain by themselves (in Iddah) for four months and ten days. When they reach their terms, there shall be no sin on you should they, in decency, do with themselves as they please. Allāh is Informed of what you do.

THE LAWS CONCERNING THE IDDAH OF A WIDOW

This verse stipulates the Iddah of a widow as four months and ten days wherein she may not wed another man, nor adorn herself in any way. These laws have been extracted from the Ahādīth. The Iddah of the pregnant widow will expire upon delivery, even if it be merely an hour after the husband's death or many months thereafter. This has been stipulated in the following verse of Surah

Talāq, *'The waiting period of the expecting mother is (up to) delivery.'* [*Surah 65, verse 4*]

Ruling: The widowed woman has to spend her Iddah in the house wherein she lived with her husband. If she is forced to earn, she may do so, but has to return immediately upon finishing her work.

Ruling: If the man died on the first night of the Islāmic month (the *night* on *which* the new moon was sighted), the Iddah will be counted *as four* months *and ten* days *thereafter. However,* if *he* died at any other time, a period of 130 days will be counted thereafter as the term for the Iddah.

Once her Iddah has expired, she is at liberty to do as she pleases on condition that she conforms with the Shari'ah. In this way, if she wishes to remarry, none can stop her, but if she wants to perpetrate any impermissible action, she must be prevented. This is implied by the verse, *"When they reach their terms, there shall be no sin on you should they, in decency, do with themselves as they please.'*

"Allāh is Informed of what you do.' If this woman, or any man for that matter, has to commit an act of disobedience, Allāh must know about it and will give the necessary chastisement.

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُم بِهِۦ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنتُمْ فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ
عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّآ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا
مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا۟ عُقْدَةَ ٱلنِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ أَجَلَهُۥ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَعْلَمُ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿235﴾

(235) There is no sin on you for marriage proposals should you proclaim them subtly or conceal them within your hearts. Allāh knows well that you will remember these women, but do not secretly promise to marry them except by saying recognised words. Do not resolve to marry until the prescribed term has run its course. Know well that verily Allāh knows what is in your hearts, so fear Him. Know (also) that Allāh is Forgiving, Most Clement.

THE PROHIBITION TO SEND AN EXPLICIT MARRIAGE PROPOSAL TO A WIDOW

A widow still passing her Iddah may not be sent an explicit marriage proposal. If it is sent indirectly or by the use of ambiguous words there will be no prohibition, e.g. He tells her not to grieve for, Allāh will provide her another husband, etc. There will also be no sin to conceal one's intention to marry within the heart. Allāh has given such concession, but He has forbidden the mixing of the two in secret as well as their marriage before the expiry of the Iddah.

Even after the expiry *of* the Iddah, Allāh again warns man to be aware of His ever presence and not to commit any sins. If a person erroneously sins, then too he should not be despondent since Allāh is also Forgiving and Most Clement.

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا۟ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى
ٱلْمُوسِعِ قَدَرُهُۥ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهُۥ مَتَٰعًۢا بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿236﴾ وَإِن
طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّآ أَن
يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَا۟ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ عُقْدَةُ ٱلنِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَن تَعْفُوٓا۟ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنسَوُا۟
ٱلْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿237﴾

(236). It is no sin on you if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them nor fixed a dowry for them. Provide for them ("Mut'ah") the rich according to his means and the poor according to his means. A fair provision which is a bounden duty for those who do good. (237) If you divorce them before touching them and you have stipulated the dowry, then half of it (shall be due), unless the women or those possessing the tie of marriage forgo it. To forgo is nearer to piety, and forget not kindness amongst yourself. Verily Allāh sees all that you do.

THE LAWS OF DOWRY AND MAT'AH

The first law stated in this verse is that the person who does not consummate the marriage, nor stipulates any dowry, will owe the wife nothing when divorcing her. However, as a token of goodwill, he should give her what is termed as "Mut'ah'. This may take the form of a set of clothing, consisting of three pieces, a scarf, an upper garment, and a third garment that covers the entire body from head to feet. The quality of these garments should be in accordance with the man's financial welfare, as implied by the verse, *"The rich according to his means and the poor according to his means. A fair provision which is a bounden duty for those who'do good."* Since every Muslim possesses the inherent quality to do good, this verse serves to inform us that this behaviour is not compulsory on an open sinner.

It is also learned from this verse that it is permissible to marry without prior stipulation of the dowry. If this took place and she was divorced or he died after consummation, she will receive the standard dowry received by other women of her family. If there was no consummation, but the dowry was stipulated, she is entitled to half the agreed amount. Of course, it will be fine if she waives the entire amount or he gives the full sum, as stated, *"Unless the women or those possessing the tie of marriage forgo it. To forgo is nearer to piety"* The one possessing the tie of marriage refers to the husband, If the dowry was specified and the marriage consummated, the full sum will be due from the husband. in forgoing one's right for the benefit of another lies immense rewards.

"and forget not kindness amongst yourself" People should continue dealing justly with each other and forget past differences.

"Verily Allāh knows all that you do." This very same reminder recurs on numerous occasions so that it is ever present in the mind. This will ensure that all actions are carried out properly and neither Allāh's rights, nor those of man are

neglected.

حَٰفِظُواْ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُواْ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ ﴿238﴾

(238) Remain wary of your prayers, especially the middle one and stand in humility before Allāh.

THE ORDER TO SAFEGUARD THE SALĀH, ESPECIALLY THE MIDDLE ONE

In the midst of the discussion concerning divorce, mention is made of Salāh. In all situations of life, Allāh should never be forgotten, and Salāh is the epitome of His remembrance, which is the life source of this world. Even in the heat of occupation, Salāh must never be omitted. Special reference is made of the "Salātul Wusta" (*"middle Salāh"*), which, according to many authentic narrations refers to the Asr Salāh. It receives special mention because its time is usually when one is occupied. At this particular time, people are generally engrossed in distracting activities which may even impede the most mindful people.

Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Allāh has made the five Salāh compulsory. Allāh has taken a pledge to forgive the one who performs them observing the proper ablution *(wudhu)*, time and carrying out the kneeling *(ruku)* with humility. Whoever does not do this has no pledge with Allāh, if he wills he may forgive them, otherwise He may punish them." [*Abu Dawūd, v.1, p.61*]

"...and stand in humility before Allāh." The word "qanitīn" may be translated as 'in humility', 'in obedience' or 'with serenity.' Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه narrated that they [the Sahāba رضى الله عنهم] used to talk during their Salāh until this verse was revealed, whereafter they would remain absolutely silent {except for the Qur'ānic recitation and prayers *(du'ās)*}. [*Bukhari, v.2, p.650*]

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه explains Qunūt to mean that a person performs long Bowings (*ruku*'s), his gaze remaining fixed on the ground in humility, and he does not turn to look anywhere else. He should not even move the pebbles from the place of prostration, nor entertain any worldly thoughts.

Other commentators explain it to mean that a person perfects his obedience to Allāh without allowing the slightest deviation from any act necessary for his obedience. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni", v.2, p.107*]

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَآ أَمِنتُمْ فَٱذْكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُواْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿239﴾

(239) If you are in fear, then (perform Salāh) while standing or riding, and when you return to safety, then remember Allāh as He had taught you that which you knew not.

HOW SHOULD SALĀH BE PERFORMED IN THE FACE OF AN ENEMY'S ONSLAUGHT?

The above question is indeed a pertinent one because Salāh cannot be performed properly in a life-threatening situation. The verse under discussion provides insight into the answer by instructing the performance of Salāh by way of indications (standing without Bowing *(ruku)* and prostrating *(Sajdah)*, or while seated upon one's conveyance if the opportunity does not present itself to dismount. When in safer conditions, the Salāh should once again be performed as has been taught. If there is no way in which Salāh can be performed because of severe fighting, it may be postponed to be read as Lapse *(Qadha)* later.

In a narration of Bukhari (*v.1, p.83*), Sayyidina Jabir bin Abdullāh رضى الله عنه reports that during the Battle of the Trench, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه cursed the non-believers *(kuffār)* because their incessant attacks had not allowed him to perform his Asr Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he had also been unable to perform his Salāh. The sun had by then almost set, but the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, together with the other Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنه, proceeded to Wady Bat'hān, performed their ablution *(wudhu)* and then their Asr Salāh when the sun had already set. They then performed the Maghrib Salāh. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that on that very occasion the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as a curse to the Polytheists said, "May Allāh fill their graves and homes with fire because they prevented us from the middle Salāh until the sun set." [*"Muslim", v.1, p.226*]

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَاجِهِم مَّتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنفُسِهِنَّ مِن مَّعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (240)

(240) Those of you who are about to die and leave their wives behind, should bequeath unto their wives a provision for a year so as not to turn them out (of their homes). If they go out (of their own accord) there is no sin for you in that which they do with themselves within their rights. Allāh is Mighty, the Wise.

MAKING A BEQUEST FOR ONE'S WIVES

During the period of ignorance, a widow was kept isolated for an entire year, whereafter she had her lap filled with camel dung. She was then paraded through the streets and alleys, throwing this dung about as an indication of the expiry of her waiting period. This has been narrated in "Bukhari"(*v.2, p.803*), "Muslim", (*v.1, p.487*) and "Abu Dawūd" (*v.1, p.314*). Islām restricted this period to four months and ten days (without the other practices), as has been discussed already.

The above verse instructs dying men to consider the plight of their wives by bequeathing a year's provision for them together with the right to reside in his home. They did, however, have the option of going elsewhere. This law was later

abrogated by the laws of inheritance, which allotted a specific share for the wives, wherefrom they are able to provide for themselves. During the period of the Iddah, however, she cannot be forced to leave the home even though it may fall into the estate.

وَلِلْمُطَلَّقَٰتِ مَتَٰعٌۢ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿241﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ
لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿242﴾

(241) For the divorced woman is a provision in kindness which is incumbent upon those fearful of Allāh. (242) Thus Allāh expounds His verse unto you so that you may understand.

THE EMPHASIS OF GIVING MAT'AH TO DIVORCED WOMEN

The law of giving Mut'ah to those divorces who were yet untouched by their husbands (with no dower being fixed for them) has already been discussed. The above verse, according to certain commentators, discusses the same law as an emphasis. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.160*) writes that this is substantiated by a narration of Ibn Juraij رحمة الله عليه from Ibn Zaid رحمة الله عليه. He says that when the verse, "*a bounden duty on those who do good" (verse 236)* was revealed, a person commented that this is optional for those who wish to do so. At this juncture the verse under discussion was revealed viz. *"Which is incumbent upon those fearful of Allāh."*

Other commentators state that "a *provision*" in this verse refers to the maintenance of the divorcee during her Iddah and, because of the broad nature of the word, it may also include all the laws discussed previously concerning the giving of the full dowry or half of it. It is all the more important for him to pay the woman after the divorce, since there remains even less chance of her foregoing the dowry.

۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ ٱلْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ مُوتُوا۟ ثُمَّ أَحْيَٰهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿243﴾ وَقَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿244﴾

(243) Have you seen those people who fled their homes in the thousands out of the fear of death. Allāh said unto them, "Die!' and then brought them all back to life. Verily Allāh is the conferer of blessings to man but most people are ungrateful. (244) Fight in the way of Allāh, and know that definitely Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing.

AN INCIDENT OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه writes in 'Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.223*) that the majority of commentators are of the opinion that this verse refers to the people of

a town called Dawardān. Once, when a plague swept through the town, many people left the town, while others remained behind. Those who left the town were unharmed while most of those who remained behind perished. When the group returned after the epidemic had abated, the survivors of the town thought that they shall also do the same if ever the pestilence returned. The following year, the plague returned once more, whereupon nearly everyone fled the town and stayed in an open plain where they thought they would be safe. Allāh dispatched two angels who shouted out from above and below them "Mutū" ("*Die!*"), and they all died.

Another report says that once a king from the Bani Isrā'īl commanded them to fight the enemy in Jihād *(religious war)*. Although they had previously prepared an army, they became cowardly on this occasion. They told the king that the place where he had commanded them to march to was engulfed in a fatal epidemic, and that they will wait for it to disappear before proceeding. Allāh then afflicted them with a plague that began to destroy them. Grief stricken by this, they all emerged from their homes. Seeing this, the king supplicated to Allāh to show these people a sign that there is no escape from death, even in fleeing. Consequently, as they left the town Allāh said "Mutū!" (*Die*!) and they all, together with their animals, perished on the spot like a single person.

Their corpses remained in this state for eight days and began to bloat. People were unable to bury such a large number of bodies, so they built a wall around them to prevent animals from devouring them. Later, when the prophet of the time, Sayyidina Hizqīl عليه السلام passed by, he was astounded by the sight. Allāh asked him whether he wished to witness a miracle. When he replied in the affirmative, Allāh brought them all back to life.

According to another report, he made prayer *(du'ā)* to Allāh to breath back life into them. When they came back to life, they all proclaimed, "Sublime is Allāh, our Sustainer, for whom is all praise. Besides You (*Oh Allāh*), there is no other deity!' They then returned to their people.

Sayyidina Qatadah رضى الله عنه says that Allāh caused them to die as a punishment because they sought to escape death. He then returned them to life since they were still to complete their lives. If this were not so, Allāh would never have brought them back to life.

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه quotes various reports with regard to their actual number. These are 3000, 4000, 8000, 10000, 30000, 40000 up to 70000. He says that a figure in excess of 10000 is more likely to be correct because of the plurality of the word 'thousands', which, in Arabic, denotes amounts in excess of 10000.

Besides these two reports, many more are recorded in the books of tafsir but they all originate from the Bani Isrā'īl (*called 'Isrā'īly' narrations*). Understanding the Qur'ān is not based upon these reports, the veracity of which cannot be established. They are therefore best left unquoted. It is sufficient to understand that Allāh is Capable of giving death to thousands or more people at one time, just as He is able to bring them all back to life.

Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was Untutored, he had no knowledge of these events which pertained to the Bani Isrā'īl. Allāh informed him of these

which is a clear sign of his apostleship, since the Arabs were generally unaware of these things.

With regard to the second verse (viz. *"Fight in the way of Allāh")* commentators say that it was addressed to those people (in the second incident) who attempted to excuse themselves from fighting in Jihād *(religious war).*

Others maintain that the order is directed towards the ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In this case, the incident of the Bani Isrā'īl serves as an introduction to this order. Therefore, this ummah should not avoid Jihād *(religious war)* because of the fear of death which is inevitable to every person, be he engaged in Jihād *(religious war)* or sitting at home. Fighting in Jihād *(religious war)* will earn a person untold rewards, while refraining from the same will only deprive him of these. It is, therefore, wiser to participate since death will still come to either person.

The plague that afflicted the Bani Isrā'īl was a source of punishment for them, whereas it is a mercy for the ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as he said in a hadith Allāh sends plagues as a chastisement to nations, but has made it a mercy unto my ummah. Should a person be present in a place of pestilence, but remains there with the conviction that harm can only come to him if it is decreed by Allāh, then such a person will attain the rank of the martyrs" [*Bukhari, v.2, p.853*] Those who die in a plague, as well as those who remain patiently in the affected area attain this privilege, as reported in the same reference of Bukhari.

Sayyidina Abdur Rahman bin Auf رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Usāma bin Zaid رضى الله عنه report that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, If you hear of an epidemic in another place, then do not go there, but if it is prevalent in the place where you are situated, do not flee." [*Bukhari, v.2, p.853*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "To flee from a place of pestilence is like deserting the battlefield. Whoever remains there with patience will attain the rank of a martyr." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh", v.1, p.139 from Ahmad*]

مَّن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يُقْرِضُ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَٰعِفَهُۥ لَهُۥٓ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ
وَيَبْصُۜطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٤٥﴾

(245) Who is it that will lend to Allāh a good loan so that Allāh may increase it manifold? Allāh straitens and increases and unto Him shall you all be returned.

THE VIRTUE OF GIVING CHARITY FOR THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH

The incident behind the revelation of this particular verse is recorded in "Lubābun Nuqūl" from a narration of Ibn Hibban, who quotes Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه. He says that when the verse *'The likeness of those who spend in the way of Allāh is as a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains"* [*Surah Baqarah, verse 261*] was revealed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم supplicated to Allāh to increase the reward. Thereafter Allāh revealed this above verse, which is phrased in the interrogative mood, giving greater encouragement.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" says that *"good loan"* means spending Lawful *(halāl)* wealth solely for Allāh's pleasure (*v.2, p.162*). Allāh, who is the Creator and sole Owner of everything, requires no assistance from any person. It is because of His infinite grace that He rewards the temporary owner of His wealth (*man*) when man gives in charity what really belongs to Allāh. In addition to this, man is promised a reward multiplied manifold even if he spends (with the correct intention) on himself and his family.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in a narration of Bukhari (*v.1, p.189*), "When a person spends even the equivalent of a date in charity, and Allāh accepts only what is Lawful *(halāl)*, then Allāh accepts this and nurtures it just like any of you will grow up his foal. Thus, this little contribution will be increased until it is equal in size to a mountain.'

A narration of Muslim (*v.2, p.258*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When the last third of the night enters, Allāh declares, 'Who will supplicate to Me that I answer his plea? Who ask of Me that I may grant him? Who will seek pardon from Me that I may pardon him? Who will give a loan to One who has everything and is not unjust?' These proclamations continue till dawn." In this hadith it is emphasised that Allāh requires nothing from anyone, but seeks this "loan" for the benefit of the one spending it. Allāh says He is not unjust, meaning, in this case, that this charity will not go unnoticed, but shall reap its due reward.

"Allāh straitens and increases" Allāh reserves the right to grant to any person whatever He wills and may restrict the provisions of whoever He wills. This has been mentioned in numerous verses of the Qur'ān e.g. *"Verily your Lord increases provisions for whom He wills and straitens. Certainly He is Informed of and Sees His bondsmen."* (*Surah Bani Isrā'īl, verse 30*). The same is mentioned in verse 82 of Surah Qasas, verse 62 of Surah Ankabūt and in two texts of Surah Sab'a (*verses 36 and 38*).

"And unto Him shall you all be returned" Whatever one spends in Allāh's way will be repaid when all shall return to Him to render their accounts before Him. No good action will be ignored there.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَإِ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِنَبِىٍّ لَّهُمُ ٱبْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُّقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِن كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَٰتِلُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟ وَمَا لَنَآ أَلَّا نُقَٰتِلَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِن دِيَٰرِنَا وَأَبْنَآئِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا۟ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ (246) وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا

قَالُوٓا۟ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِٱلْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ ٱلْمَالِ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُۥ بَسْطَةً فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ وَٱلْجِسْمِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يُؤْتِى مُلْكَهُۥ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ (247) وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ ءَايَةَ مُلْكِهِۦٓ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلتَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ءَالُ مُوسَىٰ وَءَالُ هَٰرُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (248)

(246) Did you not see the children of Isrā'īl after Mūsa عليه السلام, when they said to their prophet, "Appoint for us a king so that we may fight in Allāh's way." He said, "Would you then refrain from fighting if it was ordained for you?" They replied, "Why should we not fight in Allāh 's way when we have been exiled from our homes and children?" So when fighting was ordained for them, all, save a few, turned away. Allāh is well Aware of the wrong doers. (247) Their prophet said to them, "Allāh has appointed Talūt as king over you." They said, "How can he be given kingdom over us when we are more deserving of kingdom than him, since he has not been given any wealth?" He replied, "Verily Allāh has chosen him above you and increased him abundantly in wisdom and stature. Allāh bestows His sovereignty upon whom He wills. Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing." (248) Their prophet said to them, "The sign of his kingship is that the trunk, carried by angels, shall come to you bearing peace of reassurance from your Lord and remnants of that which was left by the house of Mūsa and Harūn عليهما السلام. Surely herein shall be a token for you if indeed you are believers."

AN INCIDENT OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL AND THE KINGSHIP OF TALŪT

In these verses, as well as those still to come till the end of this part of the Qur'ān, an account is rendered of the Bani Isrā'īl in which lie numerous lessons for the ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

After the demise of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, many prophets عليهم السلام followed in succession. Some of the popular ones recorded are Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام, Sayyidina Sham'ūn عليه السلام, Sayyidina Shamweel عليه السلام, Sayyidina Kalib bin Yuqina عليه السلام and Sayyidina Hizqīl عليه السلام. All of these preached the teachings of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and adhered to the Torah. However, irreligiousness crept into the Bani Isrā'īl, which resulted in their subjection by other nations. Their lands were overrun and they, including members of their royal families, were imprisoned and taxed. Thus, they were made to suffer much oppression and tyranny, having no leader to guide them out of their predicament.

Eventually they approached one of their prophets عليهم السلام (who also grew up suffering the same plight as theirs), requesting him to plead to Allāh to appoint for them a king who would lead them in Jihād *(religious war)* against

their aggressors. In this way they could drive these people out of their land. They requested for a king because they were used to being led by one.

The Prophet, knowing their psychology, expressed his fear that they would not keep up to their desire to fight due to their inherent cowardice. They, however, argued that they had a strong reason to fight because they had been exiled from their very own homeland and had been separated from their loved ones. In this manner, they were very convincing, but when the time and order came to fight, the Prophet's worst fears were realised, and all but a few were prepared to fight. The rest deserted, refusing to fight. Allāh appointed Talūt as their king who took charge of the army with the advice and guidance of the Prophet. Commentators mention that the Prophet concerned was Sayyidina Shamūn عليه السلام.

Once the king was appointed, they went back on their word according to their habit as they did in the incident of the bullock. They claimed to be more worthy of kingship than Talūt since he was not a wealthy person; as if to advise Allāh on the matter. This is the strange mentality of man, that he considers the rich to be of status even though they may be ignorant, foolish and miserly.

The Prophet explained to them that Allāh had chosen him since he possessed the criterion of a leader. He was wise, therefore able to plan strategies, as well as of powerful stature. Given these two qualities, together with adequate courage, any enemy could be vanquished. In the end, the decision of conferring sovereignty is Allāh's, and none has the right to question Him, nor present their opinion in the matter. *"Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing."*

Although this is sufficient for any person to accept, yet they were presented with a sign to attest this choice of leadership. The prophet عليه السلام told them, the *sign of his (kindness) is that the trunk, carried by angels Shall came to you bearing peace of reassurance from your Lord and remnants of that which was left by the house of Mūsa and Harūn* عليه السلام." The Bani Isrā'īl always used this "tabūt" (*trunk*) to gain victory over their enemies by placing it before them in battle. It was, however seized by their enemy and lost to them.

Commentators have mentioned that this "tabūt" contained two tablets of the Torah together with a few of their splintered fragments., the cane of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, the turban of Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام, and some "manna" that used to be given to the Bani Isrā'īl. The sign to them was the return of this sacred relic, carried by the angels. This was brought and placed before Talūt. However, the possibility still existed for their inherently stubborn nature to prompt them to reject the trunk. It was for this reason that Allāh added *"Surely herein shall be a token for you if indeed you are believers."*

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُم بِنَهَرٍ فَمَن شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَن لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرِبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا

لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا ٱلْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِۦ ۚ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ ٱللَّهِ كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةًۢ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿249﴾ وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا۟ لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِۦ قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿250﴾ فَهَزَمُوهُم بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُۥدُ جَالُوتَ وَءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُۥ مِمَّا يَشَآءُ ۗ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَّفَسَدَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿251﴾ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿252﴾

(249) When Talūt set out with the army he said unto them, "Surely Allāh shall try you with a river. Whoever drinks therefrom is not of me, and whoever does not taste is from me except him who takes a handful. So they drank there from save a few of them. When he and those who believed with him crossed the river, they said, "We have no strength this day against Jalūt and his hordes." Said those who knew they would meet their Lord, "How many a little group vanquished a large force by the permission of Allāh? Allāh is with the patient ones." (250) When they went into the battlefield against Jalūt and his hordes they said, "Oh our Lord, bestow on us endurance, make our feet firm and aid us against the disbelievers." (251) So they defeated them by the order of Allāh, and Dawūd killed Jalūt; and Allāh granted him kingship and wisdom, and taught him that which He willed. If Allāh had not repelled some men by others, the earth would have been corrupted, but Allāh is the Conferrer of grace unto the universe. (252) These are the portents of Allāh which We recite unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم with truth. Certainly you are amongst the messengers.

THE VICTORY OF TALŪT'S ARMY OVER THE AMALIQAH AND THE SLAYING OF JALŪT *(Gowath)*

After the arrival of the "tabūt' the Bani Isrā'īl had no option but to fight. When they began marching, Talūt told them that they shall be tested. The test was that they were only permitted to drink a handful of water from a river they were to pass. Since it was extremely hot most of them failed in the test.

Commentators say that this was the river of Palestine, while others say it was somewhere between Palestine and Jordan. Since most of them drank more than a handful, their courage was lost and they were left lifeless, saying, *"We have no strength this day against Jalūt and his hordes."* Approximately thirty or forty thousand people left with Talūt, but only 313 obeyed his instruction and sufficed on a handful of water. Only this lot stood firm before the enemy, but were hopelessly outnumbered.

They, however, resolved to be steadfast and had strong hope in Allāh's assistance which allowed even the smallest of groups to vanquish much larger armies. It is narrated that Jalūt *(Goliath)* proclaimed that a person be dispatched from Talūt's army to face him in combat. Should the person kill him *(Jalūt)*, then his kingdom would fall to the Bani Isrā'īl. On the other hand, if he killed the person, then their kingdom would be his. Talūt wished to arm Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام for the task since he had only some stones as weapons. Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام refused any weapons, saying that the help of Allāh is all that is required, since no weapon could be of any assistance without His support.

He then stepped out to fight Jalūt who asked whether he was going to use only a catapult and some stones, which were used to shoot dogs. Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام replied, You are the enemy of Allāh, and therefore worse than a dog!' Saying this, he aimed a stone between Jalūt's eyes which penetrated his brain and killed him. In this way Jalūt and his nation, the Amaliqah were defeated.

When the two armies confronted each other, the army of Sayyidina Talūt made the prayer *(du'ā)* to Allāh, *"Oh our Lord, bestow on us endurance, make our feet firm and aid us against the disbelievers.'* After this battle, Allāh gave sovereignty to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, as is mentioned in the beginning of Surah Sād. Commentators state that *"wisdom"* refers to the prophethood which Allāh conferred on him.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.173*) says that Allāh gave him kingship and prophethood after the demise of Talūt and the prophet of that time.

"If Allāh had not repelled some men by others, the earth would have been corrupted, but Allāh is the Conferrer of grace unto the universe." Allāh counteracts the might of nations with others, thereby destroying oppressors. If only one nation were granted might and power, they would have subjugated the entire populous, and caused strife throughout the passage of time.

"These are the portents of Allāh which We recite unto you [*O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم] *with truth. Certainly you are amongst the messengers."* The knowledge of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with regard to all these matters is indeed a clear sign of his apostleship since he, being unlettered, was unable to read, nor hear of these historical reports. His knowledge was purely from Allāh alone. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni," v.2, p.175*].

PART THREE

۞ تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ مِّنْهُم مَّن كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٍ
وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ
الَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنَٰتُ وَلَٰكِنِ اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ ءَامَنَ وَمِنْهُم
مَّن كَفَرَ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوا وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿253﴾

(253) These are the messengers, some of whom We have given excellence over others. There are some unto whom Allāh had spoken, while others He had exalted in status. We gave Isa, the son of Maryam, clear proofs and supported him with the Rūhul Qudus. If Allāh had so willed, then those who came after them would not have fought with one another after the clear proofs had come unto them. However, they differed, some of them believing and some disbelieving. And if Allāh had willed it, they would not have fought, but Allāh does what He wills.

THE DIFFERENT RANKS AMONG THE PROPHET عليهم السلام

The word *"These"* refer to the messengers of whom mention was made in the foregoing discussions of the first chapter. Some Prophets عليهم السلام possessed qualities which others did not have, while (according to other commentators) some of them were blessed with their own Shari'ah and others merely followed that of their predecessors.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.2*) writes that the first explanation (that the distinction was by virtue of varying qualities) is supported by the phrase, *"There are some unto whom Allāh had spoken..."* Here reference is made to direct speech, without the intermediate agency of an angel. He writes further that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was amongst this privileged group.

"Others He had exalted in status." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that *"others"* refer to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whom Allāh had blessed with such great qualities of knowledge and practice that are unimaginable. He was a mercy unto mankind and one who possessed extremely noble morals and

character. He received the Qur'ān which is the perfect miracle and will be preserved till eternity. His great status is substantiated by numerous other miracles as well. He will be accorded the highest position in the Hereafter (called the "Maqāmul Mahmūd") together with the privilege of interceding on behalf of the entire mankind for the commencement of the reckoning (called the "Shafā'atul Uzma"). All these and much more are his attributes which man is incapable of explaining.

Numerous books have been written giving a detailed description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his miracles. A most renowned one is that of Imām Jalāluddīn Suyūti رحمة الله عليه titled "Al Khasā'isul Kubra" and the masterpiece of Imām Bayhaqi رحمة الله عليه called "Dalā'ilun Nabuwah" which runs into seven volumes and thousands of pages.

"We gave Isa, the son of Maryam, clear proofs and supported him with the Rūhul Qudus [Jibr'īl عليه السلام]." The explanation of this has passed in the commentary of verse 87 of Surah Al-Baqarah where Allāh says, *"We gave clear signs to Isa, the son of Maryam and bolstered him with the Rūhul Qudus."*

"If Allāh had so willed, then those who came after them would not have fought with one another after the clear proofs had come unto them...." Despite having, the clear signs and proofs of the Prophet عليه السلام before them, the nations began to differ amongst themselves and waged war against each other. Some followed the Prophet while others rejected them. This all transpired by the will of Allāh and none may question Him with regard to His divine plan.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ
وَلَا شَفَٰعَةٌ ۗ وَٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿254﴾

(254) "O you who believe! Spend of that which We have provided for you before such a day comes when there shall be no trafficking, nor friendship, nor intercession. The disbelievers are indeed the oppressors."

SPENDING IN CHARITY BEFORE THE ADVENT OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYAMAH)*

This verse mentions that man should spend *"that which We have provided for you."* This indicates that whatever man possesses is, in reality, from Allāh, Who is the owner of everything. A person has the choice to spend this wealth in charitable causes of an optional or obligatory nature. Just as physical acts of worship serve to secure a person's safety from Hell, the same result will also be attained by means of those forms of worship that entail spending one's wealth.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in a narration of Bukhari (*v.1, p.191*), "Save yourselves from the fire even if it be by means of half a date." The Day of Judgment will be very difficult indeed. None shall be able to look to any dealings nor friendship nor intercession for assistance. It will only be one's good deeds that will avail. Therefore, one should excel in these in every way, not forgetting charity.

Commentators explain that the meaning of *"no trafficking"* is the ransoming of a soul. None shall be able to bear the punishment of another on his behalf, as Allāh says in verses 48 and 123 of Surah Al-Baqarah, *"No soul will be of avail to another."*

"......nor friendship..." No worldly ties of friendship shall remain there, but will rather be turned into enmity. None will be prepared to render any assistance to the other. The believers, however, will retain these ties, as Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"Friends shall be enemies on that day save for the pious."* [*Surah 43, verse 67*]

"....nor intercession." This is with regard to the infidels *(kuffār)*, as Allāh says in Surah Al Mu'min, *"The wrong doers shall have no ally, nor any intercessor who will be hearkened to"* [verse 18]. Intercession will only be done by those believers whom Allāh permits and only in favour of those believers whom He wills. For the infidels *(kuffār)* who turn away from Allāh, their Creator and Sustainer, there shall be no escape since Allāh declares, *"The disbelieves are indeed the oppressors.*

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلۡحَيُّ ٱلۡقَيُّومُۚ لَا تَأۡخُذُهُۥ سِنَةٞ وَلَا نَوۡمٞۚ لَّهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي
ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِي يَشۡفَعُ عِندَهُۥٓ إِلَّا بِإِذۡنِهِۦۚ يَعۡلَمُ مَا بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَمَا خَلۡفَهُمۡۖ وَلَا
يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيۡءٖ مِّنۡ عِلۡمِهِۦٓ إِلَّا بِمَا شَآءَۚ وَسِعَ كُرۡسِيُّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَۖ وَلَا يَـُٔودُهُۥ
حِفۡظُهُمَاۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَلِيُّ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ﴿255﴾

(255) Allāh is such that besides Him there is no deity, and He is Ever Living, The Maintainer. Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes Him. Unto Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all within the earth. Who is there that can intercede with Him save with His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them while they encompass naught of His knowledge except if He wills. His throne includes the heavens and the earth and He never tires to preserve them. He is The High, The Tremendous.

ALLĀH'S GREAT ATTRIBUTES

This verse is called the Āyatul Kursi, which has received much favourable mention in the Ahādīth. Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه reports that The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him, "O Abul Mundhir (*Sayyidina Ubay's title*), do you know which verse that you have learned is the greatest?" He replied that Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم know best. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repeated the question, Sayyidina Ubay رضى الله عنه said that it was Ayatul Kursi, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "May Allāh bless you in your knowledge, Abul Mundhir." [*Muslim, v.1, p.271*]

According to some Ahādīth it is referred to as the chief of all verses [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.1 p.324*]. Since this verse contains mention of Allāh's throne (called Kursi in Arabic), it is commonly referred to by all as Āyatul Kursi (the verse of the throne).

Allāh opens the Āyatul Kursi *(the verse of the throne)* by emphasising the concept of *(Tauhīd)* oneness of Allāh, which is His divine unity. None deserves to be worshipped besides Him, the One and Only Deity. Thereafter the quality of "Hayy" (Ever Living) is mentioned which denotes that He was in existence from forever and will remain forever.

The next quality mentioned is that of being the Maintainer. He created everything and sees to it that all of His creation are well maintained. He effects changes in these things, and may even leave them to be if He so desires. Whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would supplicate to Allāh during the Tahajjud Salāh, he would say, "Oh Allāh, all praise is for you. You are the maintainer of the heavens, the earth, and all that is within them." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.151*]

"Neither slumber nor sleep overcomes Him." Slumber refers to a light form of sleep, whereas during sleep itself, all sense and control are lost. Allāh is not in need of any of these since He never tires, nor is He affected by any circumstances whatsoever. When not even slumber can touch Him, sleep is farfetched. Allāh is totally free of all human needs, which are considered a defect in a deity, as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "Verily Allāh never sleeps, nor is it appropriate that He should." [*Muslim, v.1, p.99*]

"Unto Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all within the earth." He created everything and He reserves the right to do with them as He pleases.

"Who is there that can intercede by Him save with His permission?" This underlines the fact that none has the authority to intercede in His court except when He, by His grace, grants anyone the permission to do so. Then too, they are only permitted to intercede on behalf of those whom Allāh wishes.

On the Day of Judgment, people shall be in great distress while waiting for the commencement of the reckoning. They will go the various Prophet عليه السلام pleading with them to intercede before Allāh for the reckoning to begin. Each of these Prophet عليه السلام will excuse themselves until the people finally approach the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He will rise to the occasion and fall prostrate beneath the throne of Allāh, praising and exalting Him in such words inspired by Allāh, which he had never known before. Then Allāh will say, "Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم raise your head, ask and you shall be granted, intercede and your intercession shall be accepted!" The detailed account of this episode is recorded in Bukhari and Muslim.

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"On that day intercession will only benefit those whom Rahmān permits and whose speech He is pleased with."* [*verse 109*]

With regard to the angels, it is mentioned in Surah Anbiya, *"He knows what is before them and what is behind them and only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede. They tremble with fear for Him."* [*verse 28*]

A verse of Surah Najm states, *"How numerous are the angels in the heavens whose intercession will be of no avail except after Allāh permits, those whom He wills and with whom He is pleased."* [*verse 26*]

"He knows what is before them and what is behind them..." Allāh has complete

knowledge of man's conditions in this world and in the next. Some commentators interpret the verse to mean that whatever good or evil deeds people do, as well as all that they have already done is known by Allāh. Nothing past, nor present, nor future is hidden from Him.

"....while they encompass naught of His knowledge except if He wills." None possesses any knowledge of his own will, but whatever a person learns is from Allāh, while it is impossible for anyone to possess all of Allāh's knowledge.

"His throne includes the heavens and the earth..." This tells us of the great magnitude of His throne, which encompasses the heavens and the earth. Allāh does not require the faculty of sitting or reclining, nor does He need to occupy a fixed space. Verses such as the above are termed Mutashābihat. The belief of a Muslim with regard to such verses is that they accept them as Allāh had intended, and their interpretations should not be sought by basing one's deductions upon the creation. The words "Arsh" and "Kursi" are both used in the Qur'ān.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.9*) reports that Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه said, "If the seven heavens, together with the seven earths are spread out separately, their collective size, in comparison to Allāh's throne will be like that of a tiny circular object within a vast desert." He writes further that the Kursi, in comparison to the Arsh is also like a small round object cast into a vast plain. The above has been extracted from a hadith of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reported by Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه in a narration of Ibn Jarīr. Some are also of the opinion that the *'Arsh'* and the *'Kursi'* are synonymous.

"....and He never tires to preserve them." None of His creation are excluded from His protection, irrespective of their location. Man, on the other hand is incapable of even looking after a single soul, let alone the entire creation.

"He is The High, The Tremendous." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that verse includes mention of many of Allāh's attributes. He is Self-Subsisting, Maintainer of others, free of all defects and shares no grounds of similarity with any being. He controls everything, creating every original and duplicate. He is the Most Powerful to address matters, Who knows every apparent and hidden phenomenon. Nothing can overwhelm Him, He is free of anything not befitting His position, and no mind can possibly perceive His attributes completely. (*v.3, p.11*)

Lesson : Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Only death is a barrier before Heaven *(Jannah)* for that person who recites Āyatul Kursi *(the verse of the throne)* after every Salāh. Allāh will protect the home of every person who recites it before sleeping, together with the homes of his neighbours and many homes around him." [*"Mishkātul Masābih", p.89*]

According to another hadith, if a person recites Āyatul Kursi *(the verse of the throne)* upon retiring to bed, Allāh will appoint a guardian angel over him up to the next dawn, and no Devil *(Shaytān)* would be able to approach him. [*"Mishkātul Masābih", p. 185 from Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever, in the morning, recites the beginning of Surah HāMīm (also

called Surah Mu'min or Surah Ghāfir) up to *'Wa Ilaihil Masīr'* coupled with the verse of the throne, *(Āyatul Kursi)* shall remain in safety until the evening. Whoever recites them in the evening shall remain in safety until the next morning." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p.187 from Tirmidhi*]

لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسْتَمْسَكَ بِٱلْعُرْوَةِ ٱلْوُثْقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿256﴾

(256) There is no compulsion in Dīn *(religion)*. The right direction is henceforth distinct from the wrong. So whoever rejects the "Taghūt" and believes in Allāh, has grasped a strong handhold which will never break. Allāh is the All Hearing, All Knowing.

THERE IS NO COMPULSION IN DĪN*(RELIGION)*

"Lubābun Nuqūl" reports the following incident from Abu Dawūd, Nasā'ī and Ibn Hibban. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that during the period of ignorance, whenever a woman lost a child she took an oath that she would make her next child a Jew. When the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadhīr were exiled from Madinah, there were still many people of the Ansār tribes who were also Jews. The respective tribes of these individuals objected to their leaving Madinah. On this occasion, the above verse was revealed.

"Lubābun Nuqūl" also reports from Ibn Jarīr that Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه said that this verse was revealed with regard to a particular person of the Ansār, belonging to the tribe of Bani Sālim. His name was Hussain and, though himself a Muslim, had two sons who were Christians. He approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the request to force them to accept Islām. Upon this request, the above verse was revealed.

No person can be forced to accept Islām. Some people who do not understand the principles of Jihād *(religion war)* may think that it is contrary to this verse that Muslims engage in Jihād *(religion war)*. As explained earlier, Muslims never simply fight the enemy. Firstly, they are extended an invitation to accept Islām, which will save them from destruction in this world and the next. They are then given the option of paying the Jizya *(Atonement or Capitation Tax)*. This would allow them the safety of an Islāmic state and an opportunity to view Islām from within. It is only as a last resort, upon their obstinacy, that Jihād *(religion war)* takes place.

To this day, millions of disbelievers *(kuffār)* have lived their lives in disbelief *(kufr)* without any Muslim general putting a sword to his throat. Those who did accept Islām did so happily by the tireless efforts of the religious missionaries, and not under duress. The principles of Jihād *(religion war)* clearly mention the prohibition from killing women, children, aged people and monks, whereas these are the easiest to convert by force because of their weakness.

It is narrated in "Durrul Manthūr" (*v.1, p.330*) that once Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه invited an old Christian woman to Islām saying, "Accept Islām and be safe

(from the chastisement of the Hereafter)." She refused, and that night he cried to Allāh to be witness over his invitation, then recited the verse, *"There is no compulsion in Dīn (religion)."*

It should also be understood that infidelity *(kufr)* is a great rebellion against Allāh. All forms of rebellion in this world are severely punished, so naturally this greatest form of rebellion must at least deserve the same in the Hereafter. For this reason, it is necessary for the situation to be addressed before its effects carry through for a person into the Hereafter. The less infidelity *(kufr)* is perpetrated, the better. If it were not for Jihād *(religion war)*, the infidels *(kuffār)* would have long crushed the Muslims, leaving no Muslim alive today.

The normal punishment for rebellion is death (which none aware of the law will object to), while doing the same to force a person into Islām is another matter altogether. Jihād *(religion war)* does not constitute compulsion in any way.

Another aspect to be borne in mind is that there does not exist any proven method of duress to force someone into Islām because, even though a person may claim to be a Muslim, his heart could still conceal infidelity *(kufr)*. This is of no benefit to anyone, especially to the person himself on the Day of Judgment. This was the exact position of the Munāfiqīn *(hypocrites)*, who claimed to be Muslims, yet left no stone unturned to harm the Muslims.

The truth of Islām is evident though out the word , and the media network of our modern times has been used by the Muslims to make the message reach every distant corner of the world. The Qurān has been translated in numerous languages and none can claim to be ignorant of Islām. Despite all of this, many are still obstinate and are throwing themselves into destruction. Only Allāh can guide such people who wish to be the enemies of their own selves.

The Arabic word *"taghūt"* in the verse refers to all forms of rebelliousness. There exists a difference with regard to its specific meaning. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Husain bin Ali رضى الله عنه translate it to mean Satan *(Shaytān)*. This is also the opinion of Sayyidina Mujahid رحمة الله عليه and Qatadah رحمة الله عليه Imām Malik رحمة الله عليه says that it means everything which is worshipped besides Allāh. Others say that it refers specifically to idols. After recording all of these interpretations, the author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni" (v. 3, p. 13)* writes that it is best to accept the broad meaning of this word which will include all of the above.

In reality, Satan *(Shaytān)* and all his allied forces of rebellion are hell-bent on deviating people from Isllām. Therefore, the person who discards all of this and disassociates himself from them by accepting Islām, has a strong handhold which will never break. This person has taken support from the Greatest source of power and is blessed with the wealth of "Yaqīn" *(conviction)*.

"Allāh is all Hearing, All Knowing." He is well aware of those who merely claim Belief *(Imān)*, but hide infidelity *(kufr)* in the bosoms, and He also knows well those who are sincere in their belief.

The author of "Bayanul Qur'ān" writes that the person who holds firmly onto Islām will not be destroyed, nor will he suffer any losses. For this reason he is likened to the one who holds fast onto a strong rope. Just as the rope itself is unbreakable, so too is Islām, which is protected from any falsehood creeping into

it. Therefore, if he remains holding on without letting go, he will be safe. The object of the verse is to expound the strength and beauty of Islām, which is always evident.

ٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟
أَوْلِيَآؤُهُمُ ٱلطَّٰغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ ٱلنُّورِ إِلَى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿257﴾

(257) Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers, bringing them from darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their friends are the Satan's (Shayātīn), who bring them out of light and into darkness. These are the people of the Fire, wherein they shall abide forever.

ALLĀH IS THE PROTECTING FRIEND OF THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)*, WHILE SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* IS THE PATRON OF THE INFIDELS *(KUFFĀR)*

The Arabic word "Wali" refers to an aid, ally and a friend. Allāh is the "Wali' of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, taking them out of the darkness of infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*, and bringing them into the light of Islām. He thus keeps them steadfast in the light, and saves them from darkness.

On the contrary, the infidels *(kuffār)* have the devils as their accomplices, who wish that they never emerge from the abysmal darkness of infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*. By continuously preventing them from Islām, the Satan *(Shayātīn)* wish to take these people together with them to Hell, where they will all remain till eternity.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that it is better to take the broader meaning of the verse. Therefore, darkness would also mean that Allāh removed the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* from all sin, as well as infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*. The light will also then be interpreted as all forms of good deeds, which Allāh will grant them the ability to perform (*v.3, p. 14*).

He also writes that the word for light ("Nūr") has been used in the singular form, while the word for darkness ("Zulumāt") is in the plural form. This is so because the truth (light) is only one, whereas there are numerous forms of falsehood (*darkness*).

"..... *who bring them out of light into darkness.*" With regard to this, he writes that "*light*" could refer to the natural Dīn *(religion)* nature *(Fitrah)* of man upon which he was born i.e. Islām. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that every child is born upon the nature *(Fitrah)*. It could also refer to the clear and apparent proofs of the truth, which the Satans *(Shayātīn)* prevent people from perceiving.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِى حَآجَّ إِبْرَٰهِۦمَ فِى رَبِّهِۦٓ أَنْ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِۦمُ رَبِّىَ

ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا۠ أُحْىِۦ وَأُمِيتُ ۖ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْتِى بِٱلشَّمْسِ
مِنَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَرَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ
ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

(258) Have you not seen him who argued with Ibrahīm عليه السلام concerning his Lord because Allāh had given him kingship? When Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "My Lord gives life and causes death," he said, "I give life and cause death!" Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "Verily Allāh causes the sun to rise from the east, so you bring it forth from the west!" Thus was the disbeliever dumbstruck. Allāh guides not the oppressive folk.

THE ARGUMENT OF AN INFIDEL *(KĀFIR)* KING WITH SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was born in the vicinity of Babylon during the rule of Nimrūd. At the time, infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* were rampant and even the father of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was an idolater, as is mentioned in Surah An'ām and Surah Maryam. When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام invited the people towards belief in *(Tauhīd)* oneness of Allāh, they were offended. Nimrūd, together with his disbelief, also made the absurd claim to divinity. When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام invited him towards *(Tauhīd)* oneness of Allāh, he debated that there was none to be worshipped besides him. He had the audacity to make such a claim because he was enamoured by the wealth and authority which Allāh had given to him.

Upon prompting for proof, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, *"My Lord gives life and causes death."* Every person understands this fact well. A man cannot even secure his own life, let alone grant life to another. Either due to lack of understanding, or merely to prolong the altercation, Nimrūd responded by saying, "I give life and cause death!" To substantiate his absurd remark, he summoned for two people who had previously been sentenced to death. He had the one killed and the other released. A simple reply to this foolishness is the question, who was it that granted life to the person whom he apparently killed? Did Nimrūd (with regard to the second person) grant him life after death, or was it merely allowing him to continue living?

Understanding the ignorance of his adversary, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام then presented another proof to the fact that Allāh is indeed in control of the entire universe. He said, *"Verily Allāh causes the sun to rise from the east, so you bring it forth from the west!"* Nimrūd was totally flabbergasted at this challenge and could not utter another word.

"Allāh guides not the oppressive folk." Such people can never prevail over Allāh's apostles and their successors. Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"Those people who dispute concerning Allāh after He has been accepted (as the Supreme Deity by the believers), their proofs are useless before their Lord. Upon them is wrath and a great chastisement."* [*Surah 46, verse 16*]

Some commentators have written that Nimrūd could have replied to the challenge of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام by saying that he brings the sun from the east. Could Allāh bring it from the west? However, he was so dumbstruck by this time that this did not even cross his mind since those on falsehood can never stand up to those on the truth.

Other commentators maintain that he knew that the proof of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a strong one. If he had to present the counter argument, those around him would not have accepted it, thereby siding with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. In this way even the little authority that he possessed would vanish. Allāh knows best.

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّىٰ يُحْيِي هَٰذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۖ فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ ۖ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۖ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۖ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۖ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ ۖ وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا ۚ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (259)

(259) Or (did you not see) the like of him who, on passing by a locality that had fallen to utter ruin, exclaimed, "How shall Allāh restore life to this after its death?" So Allāh caused him to die (a death of) a hundred years, then brought him back to life asking him, "How long have you tarried?" He replied, I tarried a day or a part of a day. Allāh said, "No, you have tarried a hundred years. Just look at your food and drink which have not rotted, and look at your donkey! And that We make you a token unto mankind; and look at the bones, how We arrange them and cover them in flesh." When the matter became apparent to him he said, "I know that Allāh is Able to do all things."

AN INCIDENT CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Many commentators have stated that the person in this verse is Sayyidina Uzair bin Barkhiya عليه السلام. This they narrate from numerous authorities like Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Ikramah رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه. Other commentators say that he was Armiya bin Khalqiya عليه السلام. Besides these, there are other opinions as well, but these two are most renowned.

The Qur'ān illustrates the incident of a person who passed by a town that was in utter ruins. The buildings had all collapsed with their roofs caved in. On seeing this sight, he wondered in astonishment how could Allāh restore this place to life? This was not due to any doubts with regard to Allāh's ability to

enact this feat, but it was merely an exclamation of surprise that instinctively escapes a person's tongue.

The same occurred to Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام, who was convinced that Allāh can bestow a child to an aged couple, and even made prayer *(du'ā)* for this. However, when the child was born to them, he exclaimed, *"Oh my Lord! How will I have a son when my wife is barren and I have reached the pinnacle of old age?"* [*Surah Maryam, verse 8*]. This was not said in disbelief but merely out of astonishment.

It was the same in this episode, when he said, *"How shall Allāh restore life to this after its death?"* This question was also a request to Allāh to show him how the feat is performed. Consequently, Allāh caused him to die and remain in the state of death for a hundred years, whereafter he was brought back to life. Allāh asked him for how long had he remained in this state of death, whereupon he replied that it was for the duration of a day or a part of it. Commentators mention that his death came to him during mid morning, and it was just before sunset a hundred years later that life was restored to him. For this reason, when the question was posed to him, he glanced at the sun and guessed a day had passed. Upon observing that the sun had not yet set, he added that perhaps it was only a part of the day wherein he had remained dead.

Allāh corrected his misjudgment, informing him that a hundred years had passed. Despite this long period, Allāh had preserved his body as if it had been lying there for only a few hours. Then Allāh displayed His immense power by drawing his attention to the food, which had also remained perfectly fresh like his body.

Thereafter Allāh demonstrated to him how He reconstructed the decomposed body of his donkey. All its bones were scattered about, but Allāh collected them together to arrange them properly. Then Allāh covered these bones in flesh, to complete the reconstruction, after which it was brought back to life. When it was all completed before his eyes, he burst out, *"I know that Allāh is able to do all things."* Since he was a believer *(Mu'min)*, this fact was always known to him. After this eyewitness experience, his knowledge was refreshed, leading to this exclamation.

"And that We make you a token unto mankind..." This episode occurred to the person in question so that it may serve as a lesson to people after him, so that they believe in the resurrection after death. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni"*, v.3, p.23]

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِى كَيْفَ تُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِن ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَـٰكِن
لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِى ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ ٱلطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ ٱجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ
مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ٱدْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا ۚ وَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾

(260) When Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "My Lord show me how you give life to the dead." He (Allāh) asked, "Do you not believe?" He replied, "Indeed I do, but it is to satisfy my heart." Allāh said, "Take four birds, draw them to you, then

place portions of their bodies upon each hill. Then call them and they will hastily come to you. Know that Allāh is Mighty, The Wise."

THE BRINGING BACK TO LIFE OF A FEW BIRDS ON THE REQUEST OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a firm believer in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and in the resurrection after death. He posed this question to Allāh merely to have an eye witness account of Allāh's ability to resurrect. When Allāh asked him if he did not believe in His power, he replied that he did believe, but wished to bolster his faith with an eye-witness account to satisfy his heart.

According to Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه and certain others, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made this request to Allāh when the angels informed him that Allāh had chosen him to be His "Khalil" (*friend*) and that even his supplication to bring the dead back to life would be accepted. Allāh instructed him to find four birds, tame them, then cut them into pieces. These pieces were to be placed on several hills. Once this was done, he was to call them. This he did, and (instead of flying) they all came running to him, as a display of Allāh's power.

"Know that Allāh is Mighty, The Wise." He is able to do things with or without normal means. All His actions are replete with wisdom.

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِى كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٍ مِّا۟ئَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿261﴾

(261) The likeness of those who spend in the way of Allāh is as a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allāh gives increased manifold to those whom He wills. Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing.

THE REWARD OF SPENDING IN THE WAY OF ALLĀH

Whatever is spent for the pleasure of Allāh is considered to be in His way. Generally, "spending in Allāh's way" refers to spending in Jihād *(religion war)*, but any wealth spent in a good cause holds great merit in the sight of Allāh. The general principle is *"Whoever comes forth with a good deed shall get tell times the like thereof"* A tenfold reward is the minimum reward. Allāh may, in His infinite grace, accord a person much more than this.

The analogy cited in this verse is that of a grain which is planted in the ground. From it seven ears grow each of which bear a hundred more grains. In this way, seven hundred grains grow from the single original grain. Therefore, a single coin spent in the way of Allāh will earn a reward multiplied by seven hundred. This is, of course, not the limit because *"Allāh gives increased manifold to those whom He wills."* Allāh can give as much as He desires since He suffers no loss. He is also Ever Aware of whoever does any good deed, be it physical or financial, and does not allow it to be wasted. The complete reward shall be given in the Hereafter.

It is reported from several Companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم in "Ibn Majah" *(p. 198)* that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person who sponsors wealth in the way of Allāh (Jihād *(religion war)*) without himself participating, shall have his reward multiplied seven hundred times. However, the one who participates with his soul and wealth solely for the pleasure of Allāh, will gain a reward multiplied seven hundred thousand times." Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم recited the verse, *"Allāh gives increased manifold to those whom He wills."*

In a narration of Tabarāni recorded in "Durrul Manthūr" *(v.1, p.336)*, Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Virtuous is the person who makes excessive remembrance *(dhikr)* of Allāh while in the path of Allāh. For every word recited, he will receive the reward of seventy thousand, every one of these multiplied ten times." Someone asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم what the reward was for spending in the path of Allāh. He replied, "It is also the same." A student of Sayyidina Mu'ādh رضی الله عنه said, "I heard that the reward for spending in Allāh's way is seven hundred fold." Sayyidina Mu'ādh رضی الله عنه replied, "Your understanding is lacking. The reward of seven hundred is for the person who spends while remaining at home, whereas the one who spends while himself participating in Jihād *(religion war)*, shall receive such rewards from the treasures of Allāh that are beyond his imagination. Such people are the party of Allāh, and the party of Allāh are victorious."

Sayyidina Buraīdah and Anas رضی الله عنه narrate that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The reward for spending in Jihād *(religion war)* and hajj are alike. Spending one 'Dirham' will earn a reward of seven hundred Dirhams." [*"Durrul Manthūr", v.1, p.33'l*]

Allāh has not decreased the reward in any way and gives much in exchange for a little. The precondition to all of this is sincerity. The consequent verses explain the etiquette of spending together with the abomination of spending for the sake of fame.

ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مَنًّا وَلَآ أَذًى لَّهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿262﴾ قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ
وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَآ أَذًى ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَنِىٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿263﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
لَا تُبْطِلُوا۟ صَدَقَٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ وَٱلْأَذَىٰ كَٱلَّذِى يُنفِقُ مَالَهُۥ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ
وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُۥ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُۥ صَلْدًا ۖ لَّا
يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿264﴾

(262)Those who spend in the path of Allāh, thereafter do not follow it up with reminders of their generosity, nor with injury, their reward is with their Lord.

No fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. (263) A kind word with forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury. Allāh is Independent, The Clement. (264) O you who believe! Render not your charity in vain by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen by people and believes not in Allāh nor in the Last Day. His similitude is like that of a rock on which there is some sand. Smitten by a rainstorm, it is left bare. They have no control of anything which they earn, and Allāh does not guide the disbelieving folk."

THE ETIQUETTE OF SPENDING IN THE WAY OF ALLĀH AND THE SIMILITUDE OF THOSE WHO GIVE CHARITY FOR SHOW

Together with stating the reward of those spending in Allāh's way as safety from fear and grief, a warning is also sounded of two aspects which need to be avoided. These are: (1) reminders of generosity and (2) injury; both of which will render a person's charity null and void.

Many people are in the habit of reminding the recipients of their charity about their favour on them, especially when the person is a relative or resident of the same town. By doing this, they deprive themselves of the reward for their charity and cause hurt to the person concerned. Such people also begin to look down upon those upon whom they have spent, often extracting free labour from them in exchange. For this reason the word *"injury"* is mentioned in the verse. If these things are avoided, only then shall a person receive the reward for his charity.

If a person is asked for something that he cannot give, he should decline kindly, not displaying any anger, or ill feelings. This is mentioned in the verse, *"A kind word with forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury."*

Those people who, after giving charity, make a reminder of their generosity and cause hurt and injury to others are likened to those who spend to show others. They do not believe in Allāh, nor in the Day of Judgment. Thereafter, their condition is likened to a rock which has some sand particles on it. A tremendous rainstorm sweeps the rock, washing all the sand off till it is completely smooth and clean. The rock was initially a smooth one, then after such a tumultuous storm it is left without a trace of the sand and as smooth as ever.

Some commentators say that the example here is of the hypocrite. He does not believe in Allāh, nor in the Last Day. Whatever little charity he gives while in the company of the Muslims, is bereft of reward, just like the rock, which is washed clean of all the sand. Such people have no control over their actions because they were all carried out in the state of infidelity *(kufr)*, merely to show others. Their actions thus bring them no reward, nor shall they be allowed to enter Heaven *(Jannah)*.

The example of the boastful hypocrite is cited here, which is the antithesis of the sincere believer. If a Muslim also performs any action for show, the action in itself shall remain a good one, but the element of show will strip it of reward. In addition to this, he will suffer the consequences of this ostentation on the Day of Judgment.

A hadith is narrated by Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the first people to be condemned to Hell shall be three. One will be the martyr who fought in Jihād *(religion war)* so that people may say he is a brave person. The other will be a person who acquired knowledge and learnt the Qur'ān so that others may call him a learned person. The third shall be the person to whom Allāh had given wealth. He shall appear before Allāh saying that he never missed an opportunity to spend in any cause wherein lay Allāh's pleasure. Allāh will tell him that he is lying. He merely spent in charity so that people may call him a generous person. Allāh shall address all three saying that their desires were fulfillled since people did indeed call them by these titles. Each of them will then be dragged face down and cast into Hell.[*"At Targhīb wat Tarhīb," v.1 ,p 62*]

Sayyidina Shaddad bin Aus رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Whoever performs Salāh for show has committed polytheism (shirk), and whoever fasts for show has committed polytheism (shirk), and whoever gives charity for show has committed polytheism (shirk)."* [*"Mishkātul Masābih", v.3, p.455*]

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿265﴾

(265) The similitude of those who spend their wealth in search of Allāh's pleasure and the fortification of their souls, is like a garden upon a hillock. A rainstorm smites it and it brings forth double its fruit. Even if a rainstorm does not come, a light drizzle suffices. Allāh sees all that you do.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE ONE WHO SPENDS FOR THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH

This verse cites the example of the charity of the pious and sincere believers. When they spend in search of Allāh's pleasure, they also intend to strengthen their souls by virtue of this good deed, so that their souls remain accustomed to this practice and miserliness does not afflict them. Their condition is like that garden or orchard which is situated upon a hillock, this being the ideal situation for its water resources and climate. When a rainstorm comes to this garden, it cause its fruit to grow twice as much. Since the location of this garden is so favourable, even if a slight drizzle were to fall, it would suffice for it to produce abundant fruit. Therefore, whatever the people of Belief *(Imān)* will spend sincerely for Allāh's pleasure shall earn them an exceedingly handsome reward from Allāh.

"Allāh sees all that you do." Whatever action a person does, be it good or bad, sincere of ostentatious, Allāh is Ever Aware of it and shall confer the appropriate retribution. Every person should be conscious of his actions, constantly examining them for sincerity.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that the difference in the type of rain mentioned refers to the difference in the levels of sincerity. A Believer *(Mu'min)*, when his action is devoid of injury, ostentation and reminders of generosity, shall attain the reward promised for the respective actions. The extent of his reward and its level of acceptance will depend on his sincerity, which may be high, moderate, or of a low degree.

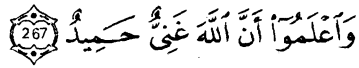
أَيَوَدُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُۥ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
لَهُۥ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَأَصَابَهُ ٱلْكِبَرُ وَلَهُۥ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَآءُ فَأَصَابَهَآ إِعْصَارٌ
فِيهِ نَارٌ فَٱحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿266﴾

(266) Would any of you like that he possess a garden of palm trees and vines, with rivers flowing beneath, containing all kinds of fruit therein? Then he is stricken with old age, begets feeble children, and a fiery windstorm strikes (his garden) burning it all. Thus Allāh expounds for you His signs so that you may ponder.

THE SIMILITUDE OF THOSE WHO DESTROY THEIR ACTS OF DEVOTION AND OBEDIENCE

This verse cites the example of the person who, although a Muslim, destroys his good actions by causing injury, making ostentation, or by doing any other action that may render deeds null and void. He is like someone who possesses a flourishing orchard of date palms, vineyards and every other type of fruit, however, He grows old and is unable to do anything. His children are also of no help to him because of their weakness. This orchard is his only source of provision from which all his expenses, as well as those of his family are met. At this critical juncture when he requires this orchard the most, a severe tempest, carrying fire with it, strikes the plantation and burns everything to cinders.

It should be understood that one of the primary objectives of good deeds is the earning of rewards in the Hereafter, where these will be of dire necessity. There they will serve to rescue a person from the punishment of Hell and deliver him to Heaven *(Jannah)*. If, however, they are not carried out with sincerity, they shall be of no avail to a person when he needs them most. Although actions like Salāh, Hajj, Jihād *(religion war)*, etc. seem to look attractive, they will be destroyed by ostentation and vanity. In a like manner, acts of charity will be destroyed when they are followed by injury and reminders of generosity The utter grief and disappointment that a person will suffer on the Day of Judgment is illustrated in this similitude. Allāh elucidates all of these examples to man to instil concern within him.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّآ أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُم بِـَٔاخِذِيهِ إِلَّآ أَن تُغْمِضُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ

(267) O you who believe! Spend of the good things that you have earned, and of that which We produce for you from the earth. Do not intend to spend of the inferior things which you would not yourselves have except with closed eyes. Know that verily Allāh is Independent, Worthy of praise.

INSTRUCTION TO SPEND OF THE BEST FOR THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH

The above verse contains the explicit instruction to spend of the best. Unlawful *(Harām)* wealth is, of course, not implied, but the best of Lawful *(Halāl)* wealth should be spent in charity.

The reason for the revelation of this verse is mentioned in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p. 82*). Sayyidina Bara bin Azib رضی الله عنه reports that it was common amongst the Ansār to hang some branches of dates between the pillars of the Mosque *(Masjid)* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم during the date season. The poor people would then eat from this. When some dry, unwanted dates were also hung there, the above verse was revealed, viz. *"Do not intend to spend of the inferior things which you would not yourselves have except with closed eyes."*

It is reported from Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه in "Lubābun Nuqūl" that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once instructed the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم to spend for the "Sadaqatul Fitr". A person presented some decayed dates, whereupon the verse was revealed, *"O you who believe! Spend of the good things that you have earned..."*

".... which you would not yourselves have except with closed eyes." In this phrase a person is reprimanded not to give such inferior things to others in charity which he would not be prepared to accept, should it be given to him. Just as none would want to accept anything of poor quality as repayment of a debt, none should give such things in charity. It is, however, another matter if a person does so out of necessity and has to give such wealth because nothing better is available.

".....and from that which we have produced for you from the earth..." Jurists have deduced from this verse that Zakāh also has to be given from one's crops. This has also been established from the Ahādīth and is referred to as "Ushr." From the broad sense of the verse, Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that this Ushr be given on all types of crops, be they grains, vegetables or fruit. The only exceptions are grass and wood.

If the crops are watered by a source that requires no capital (such as rain, rivers, streams, etc), then a tenth (10%) of the produce will have to be given to the deserving recipients of Zakāh. If the plantation is watered by a source that requires capital (such as a borehole, etc.), then half the amount *(5%)* will have to be given in Zakāh.

Ruling: The above Zakāh has no nisāb (*minimum qualifying amount*). The applicable 5% or 10% will have to be given irrespective of the amount of produce grown.

Ruling: There exists some detail with, regard to land being either of "Ushr" or "Kharāj". Briefly it may be understood that if any territory was conquered by the Muslims, then redistributed by the Leader of the Believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* amongst the Muslim soldiers, it will be regarded as "Ushr" land. The same will apply to the land of Infidels *(kuffār)* who subsequently converted to Islām.

"Know that Allāh is Independent, Worthy of praise." Allāh does not require a person's charity, but the person himself benefits by spending. Allāh is deserving of all praise and thanks for what He has given His servants. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that the word *"Hamīd"* may also be interpreted as "Hāmid" i.e. The One who praises. This is so because Allāh shows appreciation for a person's good deeds by rewarding him accordingly.

ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ
وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ (268) يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ
فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ (269)

(268) Satan (Shaytān) threatens you with poverty and instructs you to do (acts of) lewdness, whereas Allāh promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing. (269)He gives wisdom to Whom He wills, and whosoever is given wisdom has indeed received abundant good. Only those people take heed who have understanding.

SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* PROMISES POVERTY AND ALLĀH PROMISES. FORGIVENESS AND BOUNTY

This verse advises a person not to fall prey to the deviousness of Satan *(Shaytān)*. When a person wishes to spend in charity, Satan *(Shaytān)* whispers to him that this will decrease his wealth. He tells him that he should rather spare the wealth for future needs. If the person still spends, Satan *(Shaytān)* then tries to convince him to spend of the inferior wealth. In this way, he attempts to enjoin on a person miserliness and what is considered to be evil and lewd.

A person should rather take faith in Allāh's promises of pardon and bounty, which are sure to be fulfilled. To be oblivious of these promises and follow the devices of the enemy is not an act of intelligence. Acting according to the injunctions of Allāh will guarantee a person success in both worlds.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There are three things upon which I take an oath. The first is that giving Sadaqa *(charity)* does not deplete a person's wealth. The second is that Allāh will surely give honour to the one who patiently perseveres oppression, and the third is that the door to poverty shall definitely open to the one who opens the door to begging." [*"Mishkātul Masābih", p. 451, from Tirmidhi*]

Zakāh and Sadaqa serve to increase and safeguard a person's wealth. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Protect your wealth from destruction by giving Zakāh, treat the sick with Charity *(Sadaqa)*, and counter the waves of adversity

with prayer *(du')*and,humility." [*Abu Dawūd in his "Marāsil"*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Every day two angels descend. The first supplicates, 'Oh Allāh, grant the spender (*in charity*) an increase,' while the other says, 'Oh Allāh, destroy the wealth of the one who withholds." [*"Mishkātul Masābih", v.1, p.164*]

He also reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh says, 'Oh son of Ādam عليه السلام, spend (*on My creation*) and I will spend on you!" [*Bukhari*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidina Asma رضى الله عنه, "Spend in charity and do not count, otherwise Allāh will also count and provide for you. Do not hoard, otherwise Allāh shall close His beneficence to you. Spent whatever you are able to." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.193*]

Satan *(Shaytān)*, as well as a person's "Nafs" (*base instincts*) do not wish him to spend in charity, warning him of future needs. To spend in this time of dissuasion earns greater rewards. A person asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which Charity *(Sadaqa)*reaps the greatest reward. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "When a person spends while still healthy (not on his deathbed), against the dictates of his Nafs, fearing poverty, and with the desire to accumulate wealth. This charity will earn the most reward. A person should not delay giving charity until he is about to die and his soul has reached his throat. Then he says that so much is for this person and so much is for that person, whereas the wealth already belongs to someone else." [*Bukhari, v.1, p.191*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever gives Zakāh has disposed of the evil of his wealth." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb, v.1, p. 19*]

Not only does Satan *(Shaytān)* try to dissuade a person from spending in charity, but he creates all types of obstacles in an effort to shake his faith and complicate matters for him. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A Satan *(Shaytān)* and an angel preside upon a person's heart. The Satan *(Shaytān)* threatens him (with poverty and other fears) and falsifies the truth, while the angel instills the hope of good within him and acceptance of the truth. Whoever senses this feeling should know that it is from Allāh, and should praise Him. Whoever senses the opposite (the instigation of the Satan *(Shaytān)*), should seek refuge in Allāh from these." After saying this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"Satan (Shaytān) threatens you with poverty and instructs you to do (acts of) lewdness."* [*"Mishkātul Masābih," v.1, p. 18*]

"Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing." His mercy and bounty embrace all, and He has complete knowledge of all acts of charity.

"He gives wisdom to whom He wills... "Wisdom in this verse refers to things that are well consolidated, whether they be of speech or action. It is stated in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.41*), quoting from "Bahrul Muhīt", that there are approximately 29 interpretations of this word, all of which basically refer to the same thing. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه and others say that it refers to an understanding of the Qur'ān. Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه mentioned that to read and ponder on the Qur'ān constitutes practical

wisdom. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to the correct performance of all actions and verbal statements. He also mentioned that it means all knowledge of the Qur'ān, religious jurisprudence and those types of knowledge that greatly benefit a person.

Sayyidina Atā رحمة الله عليه interprets it to mean the recognition of Allāh, while Sayyidina Abu Uthmān رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it refers to a celestial light that allows one to distinguish between good and evil inspirations. Every one of these interpretations boil down to almost the same thing. Therefore, it will be appropriate to say that it refers to all beneficial knowledge as well as legitimate actions and statements.

"....and whosoever is given wisdom has indeed received abundant good." This is so because such wisdom augurs well for a person in both worlds. In a narration of Bukhari (*v.1, p.17*), Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Envy is only permitted in the case of two persons. One is the person whom Allāh has given wealth, and the ability to spend generously from it in every good cause. The other is the person whom Allāh had bestowed with wisdom, which he uses to pass correct judgments between people and teaches the same to others.

"Only those people take heed who have understanding." Such are the ones who remain far from the darkness of submitting to their carnal desires. They are those whom Allāh refers to in the verse, *"They ponder about the creation of the heavens and the earth..."* [*Surah Āl Imrān, Verse 191*]

وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُم مِّن نَّذْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُۥ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾

(270) Whatever alms you spend or oaths you vow, surely Allāh is Aware of them. The oppressors shall have no helper.

ALLĀH IS AWARE OF ALL CHARITIES AND VOWS

After mentioning the various injunctions of charity and its etiquette, Allāh now makes brief mention of the fact that He is Ever Aware of whatever is spent in His way, be it apparent or hidden. This verse therefore emphasises what was previously mentioned. At the same time, mention is also made of vows, which become binding on a person upon their inception, be they general or attached.

A general vow *(Mutlaq)*, for example, refers to a vow when a person says that he vows to observe a fast for Allāh, or perform two rakāhs of Salāh, or give some charity. The attached vow *(Mu'atlaq)* refers to when a person vows to accomplish such an action upon the occurrence of a specific event, like recovery from illness.

Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *... they should fulfill their vows"* [*Surah 22, verse 29*]. Mention is made of vows together with Charity in this verse because many a time people vow to give certain sums of money in charity. Taking a vow is not encouraged in Islām. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited the taking of vows and said, "It cannot

prevent anything, and merely serves to extract something from a miser." [*Bukhari v.2, p.990*]

Despite the prohibition, if a person takes a vow he will have to complete it unless it is for a sinful act. In that case, he will have to break the vow and pay the due expiation *(Kaffāra)*, which will (Insha Allāh) be discussed in the beginning of Surah Ma'āidah.

Ruling: It is Harām to take a vow of anything that is not permissible. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever vowed something in the obedience of Allāh, should be obedient to Allāh, and whoever took a vow that was in the disobedience of Allāh, should not disobey Him. [*Bukhari v.2 p.991*] This implies that no person should feel obliged to enact the sinful action which he vowed to do. Instead, he should do the opposite and pay the expiation *(Kaffāra)*, as narrated in "Mishkātul Masābih" (*p.298*) from reports in Abu Dawūd and Tirmidhi. One should refer to the books of Fiqh *(Islāmic jurisprudence)* for the detailed rulings of vows.

"The oppressors shall have no helper." Every sin is an act of oppression, be it major or minor. Some may even be a cause for others to be oppressed, but in reality, any sin causes oppression upon one's own soul because it will subject him to punishment. The greatest form of oppression is, therefore, infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*.

إِن تُبْدُوا۟ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِىَ ۖ وَإِن تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا ٱلْفُقَرَآءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنكُم مِّن سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿271﴾

(271) If you make your charity apparent, then this is good, but if you secretly give it to the poor, it will be better for you and atone for some of your sins. Allāh is Informed of what you do.

GIVING CHARITY OPENLY OR QUIETLY

This verse discusses the very pertinent aspect of giving charity openly or secretly. If a person carries out an action, be it Salāh, Zakāh, charity, etc with the intention of showing others so that they think that he is a pious person, this is pure show and ostentation. However, if the action is performed in front of others without this intention, and solely to please Allāh, then it will be considered to be a sincere action. If the intention is sincere and is coupled with the objective of encouraging others to do likewise, then this second intention shall earn a reward of its own.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrated his personal experience when a person once entered his home while he was engaged in Salāh. He grew concerned that his action was now seen by another. Upon reporting the incident to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the latter consoled him thus, "O Abu Hurairah, Allāh's mercy be on you. You have received a double reward:, one for a conspicuous act and another for a hidden one." [*Tirmidhi*]

The concern of Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه was due to the fact that

perchance vanity and ostentation may enter his heart once the person had seen him. Another interpretation is that he felt pleased that the person, by observing him, may also be prompted to do the same. It may be understood that ostentation is not that one performs an action in front of others, but that the intention is for others to hold a high opinion of one.

Allāh mentions in the verse that to give charity publicly is good. In the light of the above explanation, it is understood that this will apply to those who have a clear and pure intention. In doing so, they wish their action to be an example for others to follow.

Thereafter Allāh states that to give alms secretly is even better. This is due to the fact that in so doing, there exists no possibility of ostentation and pride. Another advantage of this practice is that the recipient does not feel embarrassed to accept the charity in front of others.

At times, however, it will be better to give publicly. An example of this is to contribute in the path of Allāh, or to give Zakāh in a place where people do not generally give, or for such a person to contribute who is followed by others. In these situations, it would be superior to give openly on condition that the intention is sincere. Since every person cannot exercise such control over his emotions that he is secure from succumbing to ostentation, it will be better to give alms secretly.

Some people contribute secretly but then publicise the event in the media, taking pains to have their names taken at the institutions towards which they contributed. They even wait for their names to be published with titles attached. There lies no benefit in their charities whatsoever because of the incorrect intentions of their hearts.

Whether an action is carried out in public or in secret, it will be accepted by Allāh if the intention is solely for His pleasure. A sign of sincerity is when a person enacts a good deed just as well in secret as he would have done in public. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "When a person performs Salāh perfectly before people, and when in privacy he does the same, then Allāh says, 'Definitely this is My true bondsman." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p.455*]

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.44*) writes that there are numerous Ahādīth elucidating the virtue of spending secretly. A narration occurs in the "Musnad of Ahmad" wherein Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضی اللہ عنہ asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم which Charity *(Sadaqa)* was the best. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, "To give a needy person in private and to assist the helpless person who is making an effort to earn." Thereafter he recited the verse under discussion.

In a narration of Bukhari (*v.1, p.91*) it is reported from Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Seven people will be accommodated under the shade of Allāh's throne on the day when there shall be no shade besides His shade." One of these seven shall be the person who gave charity so secretly that the left hand knew not what the right hand gave.

۞ لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَىٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٢﴾

(272) Their guidance is not your duty [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], but Allāh guides whomsoever He wills. Whatever good thing you spend is for yourselves, and you spend not except in search of Allāh 's pleasure. Whatever good you spend shall be repaid to you in full and you will not be oppressed.

ONE SHALL RECEIVE THE RECOMPENSE OF EVERY ACTION

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exerted himself to invite the infidels *(kuffār)* to Islām, but many refused to accept. This caused much grief and concern to him. Allāh revealed the above verse to console him, just as on numerous other occasions similar verses were revealed. The task of Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to show people the truth and explain this to them. Their acceptance was not his responsibility, but rather that of Allāh, Who guides aright whomsoever He pleases.

In "Rūhul Ma'āni" *(v.3 p.45)*, Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the above verse was revealed when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them to spend only on the Muslims. He also narrates that the Ansār used to refrain from giving Charity *(Sadaqa)* to their relatives who were not Muslim, waiting for them to accept Islām first. With regard to this, the above verse was revealed. Therefore the verse will mean that guidance does not depend upon whether you spend on them or not, but guidance is the exclusive task of Allāh. Whether one spends on a needy infidel *(kāfir)* or Muslim, one shall receive the full reward.

"Whatever good thing you spend is for yourselves... "Explaining this verse, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that a person shall receive the reward of any charitable act, so he should not destroy this reward by causing injury, reminding others of his generosity and being ostentatious. It could also mean that since the benefit of almsgiving accrues to the giver, he should not differentiate between his giving a needy Muslim or infidel *(kāfir)*.

"......and you spend not except in search of Allāh 's pleasure." For this reason one should spend in a manner that shall earn Allāh's pleasure, as outlined in the various etiquette already discussed. At the same time, one should avoid all those things that earn His wrath and destroy the charity. Some commentators state that this verse is actually a command to spend only for Allāh's pleasure.

"Whatever good you spend shall be repaid to you in full and you will not be oppressed." This emphasises the previous verses. Other commentators say that it means that Allāh shall give the person more wealth in this world. This is not farfetched when the hadith is borne in mind in which an angel constantly supplicates to Allāh to grant good recompense for the spender in the path of Allāh. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.3, p.46*]

Ruling: While one shall be rewarded for giving Nafl Sadaqa *(optional*

charity) to a infidel *(kāfir)*, the infidel *(kāfir)* may not be given any Zakāh, nor Wājib Sadaqa *(compulsory charity)*.

(273) (Alms) are for the poor who are constrained in the path of Allāh and cannot travel in the land. An ignorant person thinks them to be wealthy because of their restraint (from begging). You will recognise them by their mark, they do not ask of people with importunity. Whatever good thing you spend, surely Allāh knows of it.

THE INSTRUCTION TO SPEND ON THOSE IN THE PATH OF ALLĀH

This verse explains the virtue of giving charity to those who are engaged in religious activities which prevent them from earning their livelihood. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.46*) writes that this verse, refers to the people of Suffah who numbered approximately 300. They constituted of poor immigrants and lived on a raised platform covered by a thatched roof, located within the Masjidun Nabawi. Their only occupation was the acquiring of knowledge and participating in any expedition of Jihād *(religion war)* that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched.

Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to all those soldiers who have been injured in battle and are thus incapacitated.

According to the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni", it is learnt that these two groups should receive preference in spending, but alms should not be restricted only to them. The description of these people given in the verse is that they are unable to travel in search of their livelihood. This qualifies them to accept charity.

Another quality of theirs is that '*An ignorant person thinks them to be wealthy because of their restraint (from begging).*" This verse explains that those who are engaged in religious works behave independently and never ask of people, even though they cannot earn their livelihood. This behaviour fools the unwary person to think that they are wealthy. It is the duty of the Muslim to seek out such deserving people and to assist them, for the truly deserving ones are those who do not beg. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The needy person is not he who goes begging from door to door, who will be satisfied with one or two morsels or dates. The real needy person is he who has nothing to gratify himself and none are aware of his need due to his abstinence from begging. [*Bukhari, v. 1*]

The third quality of such people is that *"You will recognise them by their*

mark..." This refers to their apparent condition of destitution by which one may realise that they are needy. Some commentators interpret this to mean the signs of hardship which are evident on the face. Others maintain that it refers to the paleness of complexion caused by hunger. Others say that it is the decrepit condition of their clothing. All these opinions have been recorded in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.259*), but they are not restricted to these. A person who truly wishes to gauge their condition may do so by observing many more signs when mixing with them.

".........they do not ask of people with importunity." Commentators state that these people never beg at all. The mention of the clause "with importunity" is merely coincidental because this is the trait of many beggars. If they were to beg, why would "an ignorant person" think them to be wealthy?

"Whatever good thing you spend, surely Allāh knows of it." Allāh values everything spent in His cause and will never allow it to be wasted. Every action shall be duly rewarded.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that it is gleaned from this verse that the best people to spend upon are the religious students. The insolent remark of certain inexperienced people that such students should earn their stay is answered in the Qur'ān. It is simple to understand that no person can accomplish two tasks simultaneously, both of which require his complete attention. Anyone who has any experience in serving the Dīn *(religion)*, will know that this service demands one's full application. If one has to make an effort elsewhere it would hamper one's commitment, causing the service to Dīn *(religion)* to be impaired.

ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿274﴾

(274) Those who spend their wealth by night and day, secretly and openly, verily their reward is with their Lord. No fear will come upon them neither shall they grieve.

THE VIRTUE OF THOSE WHO GIVE CHARITY DAY AND NIGHT

In whatever way a person spends for the pleasure of Allāh, he shall receive his full reward from Allāh in the Hereafter. Then he shall not lament his charitable acts as those who had misused their wealth in sinful channels.

It is learnt from this verse that the charity given in public will also be rewarded if it was devoid of ostentation, just as that given secretly. Ostentation is the intention of the heart, not an apparent action.

ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ ٱلَّذِى يَتَخَبَّطُهُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ مِنَ ٱلْمَسِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۗ وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۚ فَمَن

جَآءَهُۥ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ

أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٧٥﴾

(275) Those who consume usury shall not rise up except like him whom the Satan (Shaytān) has driven mad by his touch. This is because they say, "Trade is just like usury!" Allāh has permitted trade and forbidden usury. He unto whom the admonition had come from his Lord and he refrained, then for him is that which has passed, and his affair rests with Allāh. Those who shall return are indeed the dwellers of the Fire wherein they shall abide forever.

THE ABOMINATION OF USURERS

The verse describes the condition of those indulging in usury. They shall rise on the Day of Judgment, totally bewildered and confused like that person whom Satan *(Shaytān)* had smitten with his touch, rendering him insane. He speaks in stuttered mumblings and is deprived of his mental capacity.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "On the night when I was transported to the heavens Ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, I passed by people whose bellies were swollen like houses. Their bellies were filled with serpents which could be seen from outside. When I asked Jibr'il علیہ السلام who these people were, he replied that they were those who consumed usury. [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p. 246 from Ahmad and Ibn Majah*]

One can well imagine the horror of a person confronted by a single serpent. How much worse will this be if his belly were to be filled with them, moreover if his belly were to be the size of a house? Such will be the state of those who consume usury.

Some people attempt to legalise usury by saying that trade is not any different since an increase in capital occurs in both transactions. This very statement is made by many in different words. Some say so by terming usury as profit. Merely altering the name of a thing cannot justify it. Allāh has forbidden usury, and it shall remain forbidden until eternity.

Since the institution of banking became common, people have grown accustomed to taking usury. They ridicule the Scholars *(Ulama)*, saying that 'their' prohibition of usury has led to the decline of the Muslims while the other nations have progressed far more rapidly. The Scholars *(Ulama)* are merely conveying the message from Allāh and have themselves no authority to make a thing Lawful *(Halāl)* or Unlawful *(Harām)*. Such people are objecting to the law of Allāh by making these absurd statements.

"Allāh has permitted trade and prohibited usury. This is the outstanding difference between the two which could not be any clearer. Even in principle, there exists a fundamental difference in that trade involves the exchange of one commodity for another where the full value of the one is given in lieu of the other. In usury, however, even after the full value of the initial loan is paid, a further amount is demanded. According to the definition of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, every loan that earns a profit is usury.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When the borrower wishes to give a gift to the lender, or offers him a ride on his conveyance, neither the ride nor the gift should be accepted unless they were previously in the habit of exchanging gifts." *["Mishkātul Masābih", p. 246 from Ibn Majah and Bayhaqi]*

Sayyidina Abu Burda رضى الله عنه relates that when he came to Madinah he met Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه who told him, "You come from a land wherein usury is rife. Whenever you give a loan to anyone, then do not even accept from him a bundle of chaff or wheat or some greens tied in a rope since this will constitute usury." [*Bukhari*]

The caution of Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه is legendary. When going to his debtors he would not even stand in the shade of their walls so as not to derive any extra benefit from them over and above their repayments.

In the prohibition of even accepting the debtor's gift lies the answer to the objection of many people. They claim that there should be no prohibition for that usury which is given happily by the debtor since he is doing so willingly. A gift is also given willingly, but it has been prohibited and declared as usury. If this is the ease with a gift, then that which is taken in the name of usury should be even worse. By mutual consent neither usury, nor bribery, nor adultery become lawful.

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Due to their oppression We forbade to the Jews the pure things which were lawful for them, and because of their prevention from Allāh's path and their consuming of usury from which they were prohibited; and their wrongful usurpation of the wealth of others. We have prepared for the disbelievers amongst them a painful punishment."* [*Surah 4, verses 160/1*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw in a dream that a person was swimming in a river of blood and every time he tried to come out he was struck in the mouth with a rock flung by another person standing beside the river. The impact caused him to return to his original position each time. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his two companions [Jibr'īl عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mika'īl عليه السلام] regarding the person, he was told that the person in the river was a usurer [*Bukhari, v.1, p.185*]. This punishment is, most probably, due to the fact that usurers oppress people and figuratively suck their blood while resting content.

Because of the gravity of the sin of usury, every person involved in the transaction is cursed. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the taker of interest, the giver, the recorder of the transaction, as well as the witnesses. He added that all share equally in the sin. [*Muslim, v.2, p.27*]

All such people should reconsider their positions who are involved in transactions of usury, like those employed in banks and building societies. Aiding in sin is also prohibited, just as it is to take employment for Unlawful *(Harām)* acts. Therefore, accepting a salary from such employment is also Unlawful *(Harām)*. The truth has to be told by the Scholars *(Ulama)* despite the adverse reaction from people.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Hanzalah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A single dirham that a person consumes knowing that it is usury is worse than committing adultery 36 times." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 246, from Ahmad and Darul Qutni*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The least sin of the 70 parts of usury is incest with one's own mother." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 246*]

"He unto whom the admonition had come from his Lord and he refrained, then for him is that which has passed, and his affair rests with Allāh." This refers to that usury which was taken before the abolition of usury. There shall be no sin for the past since then there existed no prohibition. Therefore what was previously taken in usury will not have to be returned. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni," v.3, p.51 and Madarikut Tanzil v.1 p.138*] However, the person who still involves himself in usury after being aware of the prohibition, shall have to suffer the dreaded torment of Hell.

يَمْحَقُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَيُرْبِى ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿276﴾

(276) Allāh blighted usury and increases charity, and Allāh loves not the disbeliever and Sinner.

THE BLESSINGS OF CHARITY *(SADAQA)* AND THE DESTRUCTION OF USURY

This verse outlines the difference between usury and Charity *(Sadaqa)*. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Although usury appears to increase, it eventually leads to deficiency." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 246 from Ibn Majah, Bayhaqi and Ahmad*]

The absence of blessings in the wealth of usurers is evident before all. The usurer is constantly worried about increasing his finances, making money his very life. He is totally oblivious of performing actions to please Allāh and his heart grows extremely hard. He never fails to even extract money out of the most destitute people, giving them loans at exorbitant interest rates. The commodities of life may be acquired by the wealth accrued from interest but such wealth can never buy contentment and satisfaction. While it can buy the things that lead to contentment, it can never acquire contentment itself.

This wealth is also afflicted by all sorts of calamities, and it is not uncommon for banks to become insolvent. Even if a person's ill-gotten wealth survives in this world, it will not avail him in the Hereafter, where it will be a cause of utter ruin to him. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The charity given from Unlawful wealth *(Harām wealth)* shall never be accepted, and whatever is spent there from shall have no blessings. Whatever is left behind shall be a cause for entry into Hell." [*"Mishkātul Masābih", p.242, from Ahmad*]

Whatever Unlawful *(Harām)* wealth is spent on one's family shall also be a burden for them. Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The flesh nourished by Unlawful *(Harām)* can never enter Heaven *(Jannah)*, and Hell is more deserving of it." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 242, from Ahmad*

and Darmi]

Of what use is such abundant wealth that takes a person and his family into Hell and is a source of deprivation from peace, contentment and blessings. On the other hand, the Lawful *(Halāl)* wealth that is little and accepted in charity by Allāh will bring much blessings and rewards for the person.

"Allāh loves not the disbeliever and sinner." The person who refutes the prohibition of usury, considering it permissible and continues with his disbelieving ways shall earn the wrath of Allāh, to his utter detriment.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿277﴾

(277) Surely those who believe, do good deeds, establish Salāh and pay Zakāh, their reward is with their Lord and no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve.

THE REWARD OF THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)* WHO PERFORM SALĀH AND PAY ZAKĀH

During the discussion of usury, mention is made of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* together with some of their unique actions and rewards in the Hereafter. This is in stark contrast to the usurers, who shall be totally bewildered because they earned their wealth wrongfully and never spent it in the correct avenues. Even if they did use this wealth in right channels, it would bring them no benefit in the Hereafter. Those who were believers and spent their lawfully earned wealth in noble causes shall have neither fear nor grief in the Hereafter.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَذَرُوا۟ مَا بَقِىَ مِنَ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓا۟ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿278﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَأْذَنُوا۟ بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۖ وَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿279﴾

(278) O you who believe.' Fear Allāh and give up what is left from usury if indeed you are believers. (279) If you do not, then be warned of war from Allāh and His messenger. If you repent then you may have only your principal amount. Oppress not and you shall not be oppressed.

ALLĀH'S DECLARATION OF WAR WITH THE USURERS

Commentators record that four brothers from the tribe of Bani Thaqīf borrowed some money on interest to the tribe of Bani Mughīra. When Tā'if fell to the Muslims, these four accepted Islām. When they went to the Bani Mughīra to collect their dues, the latter said that they had also accepted Islām and would never pay the interest, which was forbidden by Allāh. When the case was presented before the governor of Makkah, Sayyidina Atāb bin Usaid رضى الله عنه, he

referred it to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. On this occasion the above verse was revealed. This verse only permits the taking of the initial loan, not the interest, which was a substantial amount. However, upon hearing this verse, the brothers exclaimed, *"What strength do we possess against Allāh? We forsake the interest."*

This incident has been mentioned so that no Muslim, who has already collected large sums in interest, should say that he shall henceforth leave all remaining interest due to him, but consider all that was previously given as lawful. This verse does not refer to him. With regard to the infidels *(kuffār)* who had been collecting interest (then converted to Islām), they may keep with them what was collected while they were in infidelity *(kufr)*. It is compulsory *(Wājib)* for the Muslim who had collected interest from others to return all to them. If he cannot recall these people, it will be compulsory for him to give the equivalent sum in charity.

Every person who was previously involved in transactions of usury, should repent and desist from repeating such dealings. If they do not, then they will be engaging in battle with Allāh. They should not oppress others by taking interest and the debtors should also not oppress by not paying the principal part of the loan.

The interest derived from deposits in banks is totally Unlawful *(Harām)*. Those possessing these accounts should close them and withdraw all their original deposits. By terming this interest as profit will not justify it in the least, and will amount to 'making the statement mentioned in the verse, *"Trade is just like usury,"* whereas, *"Allāh has permitted trade and forbidden usury."*

The evil and severity of a sin, irrespective of its gravity, tends to wane when it becomes common practice. Once the institution of banking became fashionable, people began dealing in interest on a regular basis and lost all perception of its sinfulness. They even began to seek ways of legalising it. They say that the bank owners merely invest their wealth and earn a profit thereby. Therefore, they maintain that it is perfectly legal to share in these" profits" These are statements of ignorance. Although the bank is investing peoples' money, the deal was not transacted as one of "Mudārabah" (*a type of partnership*). With the banks, a person receives a fixed percentage, irrespective of fluctuations in financial returns. The transaction with the bank remains one of usury and remains Unlawful *(Harām)*.

Lesson: The declaration of war from Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is made against the person who deals in interest. The same warning is sounded to a person who chooses to harass any friend of Allāh (*pious person*). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in a narration of Bukhari, "Allāh says, 'I declare war on anyone who harms a friend of Mine!" According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The one who harms a friend of Allāh, has engaged in battle with Allāh." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p.455 from Ibn Majah and Bayhaqi*]

Commentators of hadith mention that these two grave sins which invite Allāh's declaration of war are indeed very rife. Most people are involved in usurious transactions and people continuously seek to fight and harm the friends of Allāh. Allāh's friends are those pious servants who are always engaged in devotions, possess and impart sound knowledge of the Qur'ān and Hadith,

invite towards the Dīn *(religion)*, and exert themselves for Islām. How can any person hope for Allāh' s mercy when they have engaged Him in combat?

وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (280) وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (281)

(280) If the debtor is in financial difficulty, then allow him grace till a time of ease; and that you should be charitable is better for you if you but knew. (281) Beware of the day wherein you shall be returned to Allāh, then every soul will be recompensed in full and they shall not be oppressed.

POSTPONING THE DEBT OF ONE IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY

This verse encourages the defraying of a person's debt until he is able to pay. However, if the debt is completely written off as charity, it will earn a much greater reward for the creditor. It is the practice of usurers to give a loan with interest and, when the debtor is unable to meet the repayments, they rejoicingly compound the interest. Allāh has instructed the contrary by not permitting usury in the first place. If, because of pressing circumstances, the person is unable to meet his repayment, he should be allowed grace until he is able to repay. It will be best if the creditor writes off the debt completely.

Writing a debt off has been referred to as Charity *(Sadaqa)* in this verse because waiving off debts can attain the same reward and blessings in wealth that are contained in Charity *(Sadaqa)*. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه relates a hadith concerning a person who used to give loans to people. He used to instruct the servant collecting the debts to overlook the debts of those in straitened circumstances with the hope that Allāh may overlook his sins. Upon his death, it transpired just as he had hoped, and Allāh forgave him all his sins. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.279, Muslim, v.2, p.18*]

Sayyidina Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "The person who wishes Allāh to save him from the uneasiness of the Day of Judgment, should defer the debt of an indigent person or write it off." [*Muslim, v.2, p.18*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "The person who postponed the debt of another or forgave it altogether shall be given shade by Allāh on the Day of Judgment." [*Muslim v.2 p.416*]

Giving a loan is a form of Charity *(Sadaqa)* even though the amount will be collected at a later stage. This reward is also acquired for postponing the payment deadline. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه narrates a hadith of Ahmad wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever granted respite to a hard-pressed debtor will receive the reward of that amount of Charity *(Sadaqa)* for every single day. The reward for the debt itself will be received before the expiry of the due date, then he shall receive double the reward of Charity

Sadaqa) for every other subsequent day thereafter." [*Muslim, v.1, p. 131*]

"Beware of the day when you shall be returned to Allāh..." After mentioning the aws pertaining to usury and debts, attention is drawn to the day of Reckoning. On this day every person shall be made aware of every action of his and given he due reward or punishment. The person who is concerned about his plight in he Hereafter, having conviction in its advent, and is ever conscious of the fact hat he has to render an account there, shall find it easy to abstain from all prohibited dealings.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيۡنٍ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗى فَٱكۡتُبُوهُۚ وَلۡيَكۡتُب
بَّيۡنَكُمۡ كَاتِبُۢ بِٱلۡعَدۡلِۚ وَلَا يَأۡبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكۡتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ ٱللَّهُۚ فَلۡيَكۡتُبۡ
وَلۡيُمۡلِلِ ٱلَّذِي عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَلۡيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا يَبۡخَسۡ مِنۡهُ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ فَإِن كَانَ ٱلَّذِي
عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوۡ ضَعِيفًا أَوۡ لَا يَسۡتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلۡيُمۡلِلۡ وَلِيُّهُۥ بِٱلۡعَدۡلِۚ
وَٱسۡتَشۡهِدُواْ شَهِيدَيۡنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمۡۖ فَإِن لَّمۡ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيۡنِ فَرَجُلٞ وَٱمۡرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن
تَرۡضَوۡنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا ٱلۡأُخۡرَىٰۚ وَلَا يَأۡبَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءُ
إِذَا مَا دُعُواْۚ وَلَا تَسۡـَٔمُوٓاْ أَن تَكۡتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوۡ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ أَقۡسَطُ عِندَ
ٱللَّهِ وَأَقۡوَمُ لِلشَّهَٰدَةِ وَأَدۡنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَرۡتَابُوٓاْ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً حَاضِرَةٗ تُدِيرُونَهَا
بَيۡنَكُمۡ فَلَيۡسَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكۡتُبُوهَاۗ وَأَشۡهِدُوٓاْ إِذَا تَبَايَعۡتُمۡۚ وَلَا يُضَآرَّ
كَاتِبٞ وَلَا شَهِيدٞۚ وَإِن تَفۡعَلُواْ فَإِنَّهُۥ فُسُوقُۢ بِكُمۡۗ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ
ٱللَّهُۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ (282)

(282) O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed term then record it in writing. Let the scribe record the transaction between you with equity. No scribe should refuse to write. As Allāh taught him, so should he write. Let him who incurs the debt dictate, and he should fear his Lord, diminishing naught thereof. If the one upon whom is the debt is low in understanding, or weak or unable to dictate, then the guardian of his interests should dictate with equity. Call to witness two persons from your men. If there not be two men, then one man and two women of whom you approve as witnesses so that if the one (woman) should err the other may remind her. The witnesses should not refuse when summoned. Be not reluctant in the recording of debts, be they small or large up to their fixed terms. This is more just in the sight of Allāh, surer for testimony and the best way to avoid doubt between you; except when it is actual merchandise which you transfer amangst yourselves from hand to hand. In that case there is no sin on you if you write it not. Have witnesses when you sell to

each other, and let no harm come to the scribe or the witness. If you do (harm them), then it is indeed is a grave sin on you. Fear Allāh, Allāh shall teach you. Allāh is the Knower of all things.

THE LAWS OF LENDING, RECORDING AND CALLING WITNESSES

In terms of words and letters, the verse is the longest in the Qur'ān. The verse exhorts people to record in writing all debts having a fixed date of payment. The permissibility of transacting on credit and taking loans is deduced from this together with the emphasised instruction to record these meticulously.

The amount of the debt as well as the due date of payment must be recorded in the document. This shall prove beneficial in the event of a dispute, which can easily be resolved by the document. The verse stipulates a *'fixed term"* which serves to make the term a highly defined one, such as a fixed date. Uncertain terms may not be fixed, such as saying that payment will be due when one's orchard ripens, or when he harvests, or when someone returns from a journey.

The Scholars *(Ulama)* have not classified the order to record credit transactions as obligation *(Fardh)* or compulsory (Wājib), but as an emphasised Mustahab (*highly preferable*). The verse also stresses that the scribe of the transaction should be impartial and just, not making any changes to the document. Allāh also advises the scribes not to refuse writing since Allāh granted this gifted ability to him and he should utilise it to serve Allāh's creation.

"Let him who incurs the debt dictate, and he should fear his Lord, diminishing naught thereof" In his dictation of the terms of contract, the debtor should not expropriate any right of his creditor. The debtor has been instructed to dictate because this serves as an admission by him for taking the debt. It also serves to protect him from paying extra, since he will be cautious in this matter. At the same time, he should not dictate a smaller amount by exploiting the creditor's negligence or ignorance of terminology.

However, if the debtor is unable to dictate, the guardian of his affairs may do so on his behalf. This may occur when the person is either immature or too old, prone to memory lapses and errors. It would also apply to people who are mute or do not understand the language in which the document is written. In all these cases, there exists the possibility that matters could be complicated, for which reason another well-wisher of the debtor should intervene and dictate fairly.

"Call to witness two persons from your men. If there not be two men, then one man and two women of whom you approve as witnesses...". Because of the multiplicity of their tasks and lack of education, women generally possess a forgetful nature and weakness of expression. The verse states that, together with one man, two women are required as witness "so that if the one (woman) should err the other may remind her." This applies to general circumstances since there are many exceptions where women may possess stronger memories, are more intelligent or better able to express themselves than men.

The witnesses must be sane, adult Muslims (as understood by the clause *'from your men")*. From the second clause viz. *"of whom you approve as witnesses"* it is gathered that they should also be pious and just and such that both contracting parties rely on them. Their should be no fear of partiality or injustice.

"The witnesses should not refuse when summoned." Once the witnesses are fully conversant with the matter at hand, should any dispute arise, they cannot refuse to give testimony to resolve the controversy. It shall be compulsory *(Wājib)* for them to testify when their testimony will prevent the right of any of the parties from being usurped. Should they, despite knowing the truth, conceal their testimony, they shall be greatly sinful, as mentioned in a subsequent verse.

"Be not reluctant in the recording of debts, be they small or large up to their fixed terms." The benefit of this is explained by Allāh Himself in the following verse, *"This is more just in the sight of Allāh, surer for testimony and the best way to avoid doubt between you."*

Therefore, all such transactions should be recorded. There exists only one exception viz. *"except when it is actual merchandise which you transfer amongst yourselves from hand to hand. In that case there is no sin on you if you write it not."* This refers to all cash transactions which need not be recorded if the parties do not wish to do so. However, it is still better that these also be reduced to writing, as alluded to in the statement *"there is no sin on you."* This is commonly practiced nowadays by the issuing of cash receipts and invoices. The benefit of this is that it serves as proof of purchase, whereby no other person can lay claim to the goods afterwards.

"'Have witnesses when you sell to each other..." Having witnesses has many advantages, especially in the event of a dispute. These may arise when, either intentionally or knowingly, the seller denies having received payment or denies the transaction itself. It may also occur that he claims to have absolved himself from all defects in the commodity, or the buyer refutes the purchase. At times the buyer may claim to have paid without receiving delivery of the goods, or claim that he stipulated the right to return the goods. These are just a few examples of the numerous quarrels that may be solved by calling witnesses at the time of contracting, paying and receiving.

"...and let no harm come to the scribe or the witness." In the foregoing discussion, the scribe and the witness were emphatically exhorted to execute their respective tasks without injustice towards any of the transacting parties. Here the two parties who had engaged the services of the scribe and witnesses are instructed to deal well with them in return by not harming them in any way. If the scribe requests remuneration, he should be paid and not compelled to work for free.

In the same way, if the witness requires transport to carry out his task, it shall be incumbent that this be arranged. His return home should also be provided in a like manner and this should not be ignored once his services have been rendered. Since the giving of testimony is obligatory *(Fardh)*, no remuneration can be demanded for it. If this is the case with truthful testimony, one cannot possibly ask remuneration for false testimony, which is so common in these times.

In fact, causing harm to any Muslim is not permissible. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person is cursed who harms a Muslim, as well as he who devises a scheme to do so." [*Tirmidhi*] Not harming the scribe and the witness is, however emphasised in this verse, the result of which is *"If you do (harm them), then it is indeed is a grave sin on you.*

"Fear Allāh, Allāh shall teach you. Allāh is the Knower of all things." One should recognise the favours of Allāh and He will educate His servants regarding the various laws and ordinances. He is Aware of every injustice done to others, be it major or minor. It should never be misunderstood that these vile acts have ended here, but they will have to be accounted for in the Hereafter.

وَإِن كُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا فَرِهَٰنٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِى اؤْتُمِنَ أَمَٰنَتَهُۥ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَٰدَةَ وَمَن يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُۥٓ ءَاثِمٌ قَلْبُهُۥ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿283﴾

(283) If you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe, then a pledge in hand. If any of you entrust another, then let him who is trusted deliver what is entrusted to him and let him fear Allāh. Conceal not testimony for whoever conceals it has a sinful heart. Allāh knows well whatever you do.

THE LAW OF THE PLEDGE *(RAHN)* AND THE EVIL OF CONCEALING TESTIMONY

This verse explains that if on journey no scribes are found to record a transaction, the buyer should keep something in trust with the seller so that he be reassured of repayment. The mention of a journey is coincidental and this deal may also take place when not on journey.

The mention of the word "maqbuda" *("in hand")* stipulates that the transaction is only complete when the "Rāhin" (giver) hands the commodity over to the "Murtahin" (receiver). Merely a verbal agreement without the actual transfer is not sufficient. If no scribe, no witness, nor any item is available to place as "Rahn" with the creditor, but he gives the loan purely on trust, then it is the duty of the debtor to ensure repayment. He should not sway to the dictates of his Nafs and the Satan *(Shaytān)* by attempting to betray the person's trust in him and not paying with the belief that there is no way in which the creditor can implicate him should he not pay. Although it is obligatory to repay every debt, such a debt where there exists no contract, no witness and no Rahn is even more binding on a person and its fulfillment is more in keeping with the demands of etiquette and nobility.

If a person usurps the right of any other on this basis, there is no escape for him in the Hereafter, where he will have to repay very dearly. There the magistrate shall be Allāh, Who will demand an account for every little thing. Repayment shall be with good deeds, which, in their absence, will be substituted by burdening the debtor with the creditor's sins. Allāh, before whom nothing is

hidden, will most assuredly achieve what the law of this world could not accomplish. For this reason He says, *"and let him fear Allāh, his Lord."*

"Conceal not testimony for whoever conceals it has a sinful heart. Allāh knows well whatever you do." This verse makes it clear that to conceal evidence is Unlawful *(Harām)*. If someone's right is in danger of being lost, and another may save it by way of his timeous testimony, it will be Unlawful *(Harām)* for him not to come forward with the same upon request. If he is not summoned, it will not be binding on him to present himself. The verse also makes it apparent that to conceal evidence and testimony is not only a sin of the limbs, but denotes a sinful heart as well.

"Allāh knows well whatever you do." Every person, including the one who conceals testimony, should bear in mind that Allāh is ever conscious of each action of theirs and shall definitely require the perpetrator to render an account on the Day of Judgment.

لِّلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِن تُبْدُوا۟ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ
يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿284﴾ ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَقَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿285﴾ لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا ٱكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا
تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَآ إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا
طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ۖ وَٱعْفُ عَنَّا وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَآ ۚ أَنتَ مَوْلَىٰنَا فَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿286﴾

(284) Unto Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Whether you make known what is in your hearts or conceal it, Allāh will bring you to account for it. He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills. Allāh is Able to do all things. (285) The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم believes in that which has been revealed to him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allāh, His angels, His scriptures and His messengers. (They say) "We make no distinction between one and another messenger," and they say, "We hear and we obey. Pardon us our Lord. Unto You is our return." (286) Allāh does not task any soul beyond its capability. It shall receive in its favour that which it had earned and to its detriment shall be the sins that it had perpetrated. "Oh our Lord, do not take us to account if we forget or err. Our Lord, do not place such a burden on us as You had placed on those

before us. Our Lord, do not impose on us that which we have not the strength to bear. Pardon us, forgive us and have mercy on us.. You are our Protector so assist us against the disbelievers."

FORGIVENESS OF ERRORS AND FORGETFUL ACTS, AS WELL AS SOME PRAYERS *(DU'ĀS)* TO BE RECITED

The limbs of the body are capable of doing voluntary and involuntary acts. Involuntary acts are like the trembling of palsied people, or the muttering of sleeping people. These impulses cannot be controlled and, therefore, a person is not responsible for them, neither shall there be any retribution for them. If a person cried instinctively upon the death of his child, he will not be sinful. However, if he said such things on this occasion that constituted an objection to Allāh, he will be punished for these statements of infidelity *(kufr)*.

In the same way, the actions of the heart also fall into these two categories. A person will not be responsible for whatever thoughts occur involuntarily. On the other hand, if he intentionally brings into his heart something that is sinful, he will be required to render an account for the same; such as when he harbours enmity or jealousy, or devises a scheme to harm another person. There shall be no sin should a fleeting evil thought enter one's mind.

The verse opens with the statement that everything belongs to Allāh and He is therefore in complete control of all, man's affairs. Whatever He wishes for them cannot be repealed by anyone. He may take people to task for whatever thoughts He deems fit, and He may also pardon them if He deems it fit, irrespective of whether they display them or conceal them. However, the sins of infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* will never be forgiven by Him, as explained in other verses. Allāh then says that He is capable of doing anything, be it accounting, pardoning or punishing.

Since the verse does not stipulate the difference between voluntary and involuntary thoughts, the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم were very concerned when they heard the verse. They approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "O Prophet of Allāh the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Thus far we have been instructed to carry out actions that were within our capability (like Salāh, Zakāh, Jihād *(religion war)*, etc.). Now we are unable to do what is instructed in this verse. (i.e. we are unable to control the thoughts that occur to our hearts)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "Let it not be that you also say what the people of the book said when an injunction was imposed upon them. They said, *'We hear and we disobey.'* You should say, *'We hear and we obey. Pardon us our Lord, unto You is our return.'* The Companions *(Sahābah)* رضی الله عنهم repeated these words, thereafter Allāh revealed the consequent verses viz. *"The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *believes in that which has been revealed to him from his Lord and (so do) the believers... (up to the end of the Surah)."* These verses praises the believers and indicates their acceptance of Allāh's orders by saying, *"...and they say. 'We hear and we obey. Pardon us our Lord. Unto You is our return."* Thereafter,, the general connotation of the former injunction was cancelled by the statement, *"Allāh does not task any soul beyond its capability."* [*Muslim, v.1, p.77*]

"Allāh does not task any soul beyond its capability." This verse refers to

involuntary actions that no person will be asked about. Concerning voluntary actions Allāh states further, *"It (the soul) shall receive in its favour that which it had earned and to its detriment shall be the sins that it had perpetrated."*

This also includes the actions of the heart as Allāh says in another part of Surah Al-Baqarah (*verse 225*), *". . . but (Allāh) will try you for that which your hearts intend."* This is also substantiated by the following verse in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"Definitely questioning shall take place with regard to ears, eyes and heart."* [*Surah 17, verse 36*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh has pardoned my Ummah for all that occurs in their minds unless they practise upon these or say them." [*Muslim v.1 p.75*]

Man is constantly plagued by evil thoughts that are injected by Satan *(Shaytān)*. These should not concern him since he is not responsible for them due to their involuntary nature. He will only be answerable for them once he acts on them by carrying out the evil action or uttering an evil word.

The occurrence of these evil thoughts in one's mind is a sign of his sincere Belief *(Imān)*. It is reported in Muslim (*v.1, p.79*) that the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم asked, "Such things occur in our hearts that we find difficult to express." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم enquired, "Do you really feel this?" When they replied in the affirmative, he said, "This is true Belief *(Imān)*."

In Abu Dawūd (*v.2 p.341*) it is narrated that a person told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Such thoughts plague my mind that I prefer my tongue becoming coals rather than mentioning them." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exclaimed, *"Allāhu Akbar! Allāhu Akbar*! All praise be to Allāh who had confined the evil of Satan *(Shaytān)* to mere thoughts." (i.e. If the person did not possess Belief *(Imān)*, he would not have considered it difficult to utter these words. He is, therefore, a person of true Belief *(Imān)*.)

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Satan *(Shaytān)* will come to you and ask who created certain things? In this way he will eventually ask who created Allāh? When matters reach such a head, then seek protection with Allāh from Satan *(Shaytān)* and let the matter rest i.e. do not further entertain the discussion)."

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "People keep asking each other questions until they ask that if everything is the creation of Allāh, who created Allāh? Whoever experiences this should say, *'Āmantu Billahi Wa Rusulihi*! (I believe in Allāh and His messengers!)" [*Ibid*]

In a narration of Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised the person in this predicament to recite, *"Allāhu Ahad Allāhus Samad lam yalid wa lam yūlid wa lam yakul lahu kufu'wan ahad."* Thereafter he should make the action of spitting three times to the left and recite *"A'udhu Billahi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"* [I seek protection with Allāh from the accursed Satan *(Shaytān)*]. [*"Mishkātul Masābih", p. 19*]

The verse is under discussion, Allāh advises His bondsmen to recite certain Prayer *(du'ā)*. The first is, *"Oh our Lord, do not take us to account if we forget or err."*

The author of "Jalālain" states that according to the hadith there will be no accountability for errors and forgetfulness. Error does not refer to sins, but to something done unintentionally. It should be borne in mind that the waiving of accountability is a separate matter from the application of laws and penalties. For example, if a person forgetfully talks in Salāh, the Salāh shall be nullified and if he mistakenly kills another Muslim, he will have to pay the blood money. These laws will apply even though the person will not be sinful.

"Our Lord, do not place such a burden on us as You had placed on those before us." The Bani Isrā'īl were enjoined with difficult injunctions such as sacrificing their lives for the acceptance of their repentance. They had to pay a quarter of their wealth in Zakāh and were required to cut off the impure portion of their clothing instead of just washing it. When a person from them committed a sin at night, it would be written on his front door in the morning. Numerous pure things were also forbidden to them, as Allāh says, *"We forbade for them certain things which were lawful for them."* [*Surah Nisā, verse 160*] Allāh says in another verse, *"We forbade every clawed animal to the Jews. From cattle and goats We forbade them the fat of the two, excluding what is carried by the back, the entrails and what is attached to the bones. This We granted them as retribution for their rebellion., and undoubtedly We are truthful."* [*Surah An'ām, verse 146*]

The Bani Isrā'īl were permitted only to pray in their appointed places of worship, and the spoils of war were forbidden for them. Allāh made laws and injunctions much easier for the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says regarding the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"He permits for them the pure things, forbids them from the impure things and removes from them the burden and shackles which were upon them."* [*Surah A'rāf, verse 157*]

"Our Lord, do not impose on us that which we have not the strength to bear." This refers to the injunctions of Shari'ah as well as natural calamities, as mentioned by the author of "Jalālain".

At the end, four brief Prayers *(du'ās)* are mentioned collectively, *"Pardon us, forgive us and have mercy on us. You are our Protector so assist us against the disbelievers."* According to a hadith of Muslim (*v.1 p.78*) Allāh replies "Yes" to each of these Prayers *(du'ās)*, while according to another narration He says, "I have done so," i.e. "as you asked, and I have accepted your Prayer *(du'ā)*."

In a hadith of Muslim (*v.1, p.97*) it is recorded that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was awarded three things during the Ascension *(Mi'rāj)* viz:

(1) *The five salawāt (plural of salāh)*

(2) *The concluding verses of Surah Al-Baqarah (from Āmanar Rasūl up to the end)*

(3) *The major sins of his "Ummah will be forgiven if they do not commit shirk, (The pardoning of major sins will be due to the mercy of Allāh, or repentance, or after receiving a brief punishment in Hell whereafter these believing sinners will also enter Heaven (Jannah).*

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that once Jibr'īl عليه السلام was sitting

with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when they heard a tremendous sound from the sky. They looked upwards and Jibr'īl عليه السلام said that a door of the heavens had opened which had not been opened before this day. An angel appeared from this door whom Jibr'īl عليه السلام introduced as one who had before this day never descended to the earth. This angel greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with salām and said, "I wish to inform you of two celestial lights that have been conferred specially to you and to no other Prophet before. The first is the Fātihatul Kitāb (the opening chapter of the Qur'ān called Surah Fātihah), and the second is the concluding portion of Surah Baqarah. Whichever of these you recite [as Prayers *(du'ās)*] Allāh will surely grant you your request." [*Muslim, v.1, p.271*]

The virtue and importance of these verses can be gathered from these Ahādīth. They were revealed on Ascension *(Mi'rāj)* and any Prayer *(du'ā)* made with them will be accepted by Allāh.

It is narrated in a hadith that whoever recites these verses at night they will suffice for him. [*Bukhari, v.2, p.755, Muslim, v.2, p .271*] Commentators mention that this means that the recitation of these verses will be sufficient to protect the person from the harm and evil of all men and jinn. Others say that he shall be safe from all calamities and adversities, while a third opinion is that these will suffice for all the other devotional acts which could not be carried out for some reason. Still another group maintains that these will suffice to substitute the optional Salāh at night.

سورة آل عمران

Madinan	Suraha Āl-Imran	Verses 200

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ ٱلْقَيُّومُ ﴿٢﴾ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٣﴾ مِن قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنزَلَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٤﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَىْءٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿٥﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm. (2) Allāh is He besides whom there is no other deity, He is Living, the Maintainer. (3) He revealed the Qur'ān to you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] with the truth, confirming that which was before it and revealed the Torah and Injīl. (4) from aforetime as a guidance to man and He revealed the Discerner. Verily those who disbelieve in the verses of Allāh shall have an immense punishment. Allāh is Mighty, the Avenger. (5) Definitely nothing in the heavens or the earth is hidden from Allāh. (6) He is the One who fashions you in the wombs as He pleases. There is no deity save Him, The Mighty, The Wise.

A DISCUSSION WITH A DELEGATION OF CHRISTIANS AND REFUTING THEIR STATEMENTS

It is narrated in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.90*) and "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.27*) that a Christian delegation of 70 came to Madinah. Fourteen of them were chiefs, the leader being a person called Abdul Masīh. Another important person with them was someone named Abham. They entered the Masjidun Nabawi and prayed facing east.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم invited the two most senior members of this delegation to Islām upon which they said that they had accepted the Dīn *(religion)* even before him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that they

were lying (since the only Dīn *(religion)* acceptable in the sight of Allāh is Islām. Islām invites towards Tauhīd which, if not accepted, can never qualify a person as a Muslim). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked them, "How can you claim to be Muslims when you ascribe children to Allāh, worship the cross and eat pork?" They replied, "If Isā عليه السلام is not the son of Allāh then who is his father?" In this way they, together with their companions, continued debating.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked them, "Should a son not resemble his father?" When they replied in the affirmative the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "Do you not know that our Lord has been alive forever and will remain so forever, whereas Isā عليه السلام has passed away." (According to their belief he was crucified whereas Muslims believe he was raised to the heavens and he will return before the Day of Judgment.) They accepted this point.

Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "Do you not know that our Lord maintains each and every thing, protects them and provides for them?" When they accepted this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went on further to say, "What does Isā عليه السلام do in this regard?" They replied that he could not accomplish these feats, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do you not know that nothing in the heavens nor the earth is hidden from Allāh?" When they admitted this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Does Isā عليه السلام possess any knowledge more than what Allāh had given him?" They replied that his knowledge was limited to this.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "Allāh fashioned Isā عليه السلام in the womb of his mother as He wished. Neither does Our Lord eat nor does He drink. What is your belief in this regard?" They admitted that whatever had been said was indeed the truth. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then questioned them, "Did Isā عليه السلام not remain in his mother's womb just like others do, and was he not born like others are born? Was he then not fed as other babies and did he not eat and drink as others do? Did he not undergo conditions of impurity?" They admitted to these facts. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told them, "Then how can it be possible that he is the son of Allāh?" Upon hearing this, they fell silent and Allāh revealed the opening verses of Surah Āl Imrān which number over 80.

These verses mention Allāh's Being and attributes. No person can be a Muslim without believing in them. Between these verses, Allāh also addresses the polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* and advises abstaining from the pleasures of this world in lieu for those of the Hereafter. Mention is also made of the fact that the only Dīn *(religion)* acceptable by Allāh is Islām, together with the incidents of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and his mother Sayyidina Maryam عليه السلام. Details are also given of his ascension to the heavens. The challenge of "Mubāhala" is given on behalf of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, which the Christians declined. This and much more is expounded in these verses.

THE VIRTUE OF SURAH ĀL IMRĀN

This Surah is a "talking proof" against the Jews, Christians and idolaters since it addresses them all. It invites them towards the truth and refutes their false beliefs, which include the blasphemous ideologies concerning Sayyidina Isa

and Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Nawās bin Sam'ān رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgment the Qur'ān and all those who practiced the Qur'ān shall be summoned. In the forefront will be Surah Baqarah and Āl Imrān, which will appear in the form of two clouds or canopies, whose shade shall be the densest. Light will shine forth from between them." [*Muslim, v.1, p.270*]

"Alif Lām Mīm." These are called "Hurūf Muqata'āt" and none know their meaning except Allāh, as explained in the beginning of Surah Baqarah.

"Allāh is He besides whom there is no other deity, He is Living, the Maintainer." This statement of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* refutes the belief of the idolators. The attribute "Al Hayy" *("The Living ")* refers to the being who was from forever and shall remain forever without ever experiencing death.

The second attribute "Al Qayyūm" *("The Maintainer")* refer to His creating and looking after all of His creation. He alone nurtures them and keeps them in existence. He may cause their existences to terminate whenever He pleases. It is evident that the Being in possession of all these qualities is worthy of worshipping and any other that is dependant on Him cannot be considered deserving of worship.

MENTION OF THE DIVINE SCRIPTURES

"He revealed the Qur'ān to you Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم *with the truth, confirming that which was before it and revealed the Torah and Injīl from aforetime as a guidance to man and He revealed the Discerner."*

Mention is made of the fact that the Qur'ān affirms all that is in the previous books. This fact serves to console the hearts of the Jews and Christians as well as being an invitation towards Islām. This encourages them to draw closer to Islām and the Qur'ān, which testifies to all that they believed in, including oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, Prophethood and belief in the Last Day.

If the Qur'ān did not confirm what was in the previous books, the people could have used this as an excuse not to accept Islām. Just as the Injīl confirmed the Torah, so too does the Qur'ān confirm both of them, together with all the other divine scriptures. None should be surprised by the revelation of the Qur'ān because they had already accepted the revelation of scriptures many before it. All were from the same Allāh.

The Torah and Injīl are described as guidance for mankind, just as the Qur'ān was described likewise in verse *185* of Surah Baqarah. Included in the guidance contained in these two is the heralding of the final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

THE MEANING OF THE "DISCERNER".

The Arabic word "Furqān" *(Discerner)* refers to something that differentiates between things. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.77*) has recorded several opinions with regard to the interpretation of this word. Sayyidina Qatada رحمة الله عليه says that it' refers to the Qur'ān which discerns between truth and falsehood. It includes elucidation of Lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful *(Harām)*, restrictions and

obligations, obedience and disobedience.

Another opinion is that it refers to all the divine scriptures. Other commentators maintain that it refers specifically to the Zabūr revealed to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام since the other three famous books were all mentioned. Another opinion is that the "Discerner" is the miracles of the Prophet عليه السلام because through them the truth is separated from falsehood.

A WARNING TO THE REJECTERS

"Verily those who disbelieve in the verses of Allāh shall have an immense punishment. Allāh is Mighty, the Avenger. "Allāh is capable of punishing whomsoever He desires because of His overwhelming power and might. Two attributes are mentioned here to emphasise the fact that none can escape His grasp and act beyond His knowledge.

NOTHING IS HIDDEN FROM ALLĀH

"Definitely nothing in the heavens or the earth is hidden from Allāh. " The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that the entire universe is implied in this verse, including every creation of Allāh. The heavens and earth have received specific mention because they are usually visible and known by all. Nothing of these is hidden from Him.

This verse also alludes to the fact that certain hidden things may be known to some (like how Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام knew What people stored in their homes), but this does not necessarily make them a deity, since a true deity (*Allāh*) has knowledge of everything. His knowledge is not limited and nothing is hidden from Him.

ALLĀH FASHIONS CHILDREN IN THE WOMBS OF THEIR MOTHERS AS HE PLEASES

"He is the One who fashions you in the wombs as He pleases." Muslims and Non-Muslim *(kuffār)* acknowledge this attribute that Allāh creates the forms of foetuses as He pleases. None has any say in whether the child to be born is physically sound or deformed. He decides whether the child is black or white, male or female, with a high nose or flat nose, and He alone decides every other feature of the child. Neither does the father have any say in this matter, nor the mother. This is the case with every other creature as well.

This verse points to the fact that one who cannot even determine his own form and features cannot possibly be worshipped. Even these false gods were forced to accept the decree of Allāh in this matter. This verse refutes the belief of the Christians that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh, because he was created in the form decided by Allāh and had no choice in the matter.

"There is no deity save Him, The Mighty, The Wise." The concept of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* is reiterated with the addition that He is Mighty and Wise. Nothing is beyond His might and power and everything that He created is created most wisely.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُّحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ ۖ فَأَمَّا
الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۗ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ
تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾

(7) He it was Who revealed unto you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] the book wherein lies 'Muhkamāt' (clear) verses that are the 'Ummul Kitāb' and others that are 'Mutashābihāt' (allegorical). As for those who have crookedness in their hearts, they pursue those that are allegorical (Mutashā-bihāt), thereby seeking to cause dissension and seeking their interpretation. None knows their interpretation except Allāh. Those who are sound in knowledge say, "We believe therein, all is from our Lord." None take heed besides men of understanding.

THE MEANING OF CLEAR VERSES *(MUHKAMĀT)* AND ALLEGORICAL VERSES (*MUTASHĀBIHĀT*)

This verse states that the Qur'ān comprises of both these two types of verses, while other verses mention that all the verses are of the clear *(Muhkamāt)* type e.g. *.....a book the verses of which are Muhkam..."* [*Surah Hūd, verse 1*]. On the other hand, other verses mention that all the verses are Allegorical *(Mutashābihāt)* e.g. *"Allāh revealed the best of speech, a book of meaning that is Clear (Mutashābih)..."*

The entire Qur'ān is Muhkam *(clear and comprehensible)* in a sense that all its verses are the truth and every word and purport is so accurate that none can raise any objection. The words and purport are all clear, coherent and resolute. Where the entire Qur'ān is said to be Allegorical *(Mutashābih)*, it means that all the verses are similar and alike in their beauty, eloquence and truth.

In the above verse of Surah Āl Imrān, *"Muhkamāt"* refers to those verses whose meaning is apparent and clearly comprehensible. They are the *'Ummul Kitāb"* (*"Mother of the Book")* in the sense that they constitute the substance and basic principles of the Qur'ān. They contain clear orders and prohibitions wherein lies no cause of doubt for anyone. Those verses that are seemingly obscure and ambiguous will also be included in this type of verse. Only those verses whose interpretation is known exclusively by Allāh are referred to as the Allegorical Verses *(Mutashābihāt)*.

THE ATTITUDE OF THOSE WHO ARE SOUND IN KNOWLEDGE

People who have sound knowledge interpret the Allegorical Verses *(Mutashābihāt)* as they understand the clear and comprehensible verses *(Muhkamāt)*. They reject whatever interpretations seem to contradict and conflict with the principle *(Muhkam)* verses. They interpret in a way that does not contradict the accepted views and principles. If they cannot do this, they accept it to mean what Allāh had willed it to mean. This method of approach is the best

and the most cautious. Many people try to uncover the meanings of these verses but because of the corruption in their hearts, they cannot understand them. They also attempt to unravel the hidden meanings of the Allegorical verse *(Mutashābihāt)*, eventually causing dissension by concocting interpretations that conform to their personal dictates, whims and fancies, even though these contradict the accepted principles of the Qur'ān.

Many people who reject the Ahādīth soon reject the Qur'ān as well because they seek to pursue the meanings of the Allegorical verse *(Mutashābihāt)* and because the inherent evil in their hearts drives them away from the Qur'ān.

EXAMPLES OF SUCH ALLEGORICAL VERSE (MUTASHĀBIH VERSES) ARE:

- *"The Most Merciful is firm upon the throne."* [*Surah Tāhā, verse 5*]
- *"The day when the calf shall be exposed."* [*Surah Qalam, verse 42*]
- *"Your Lord come and the angels in rows."* [*Surah Fajr, verse 22*]
- *"'The hand of Allāh is above their hands. "* [*Surah Fatah, verse 10*]

Those who are sound and firm in their knowledge accept all these without needing to understand their exact meanings and say that they take the meaning in whichever way Allāh desires it to be understood. *"Those who are sound in knowledge say, 'We believe therein, all is from our Lord.* "These are men who are well-versed in the Qur'ān and admit their ignorance concerning the Allegorical verse *(Mutashābihāt)*, which is beyond their knowledge.

When Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه was questioned regarding the meaning of the verse, *"The Most Merciful is firm upon the throne,"* he replied, "The literal meaning is understood but the manner is unknown. Belief in it is incumbent and to question it is an innovation." It is incumbent to believe that Allāh is free from faults, deficiencies and from the need for a body. At the same time, it is also necessary to believe in everything revealed in the Qur'ān. In this way, one does not conflict with the belief that *"Nothing is like Him"* [*Surah Shura, verse 11*]. Many people take the literal meaning of such verses and forget the accepted principle of *"Nothing is like Him."*

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you see people who attempt to interpret the Allegorical verse *(Mutashābihāt)* then avoid them, for they are the ones that Allāh has mentioned." (i.e. warned against in the verse: *"As for those who have crookedness in their hearts, they pursue those that are allegorical (Mutashābihāt), thereby seeking to cause dissension and seeking their interpretation."*)

Some commentators maintain that the Allegorical *(Mutashābihāt)* are actually a test for the knowledgeable people with an inquiring mind that they desist from probing into the matter. As for those who have no inclination towards learning, it serves to inspire them to acquire the knowledge of the Clear and Comprehensible verse *(Muhkamāt)*.

(8) "Our Lord, cause not our hearts to stray after You have guided us and bestow on us Your mercy for verily You are the Bestower." (9) "Our Lord, surely You shall gather mankind together on a day wherein there is no doubt. Surely Allāh never fails to meet a tryst."

THE SUPPLICATION OF THOSE WHO ARE SOUND OF KNOWLEDGE

These two verses contain the Supplication *(du'ā)* of the people whom Allāh had describes as *"Those who are sound in knowledge*. They attest to the guidance which Allāh conferred upon them, exhorting Him to keep them steadfast by not allowing their hearts to succumb to deviation and crookedness. They do not wish to be among those whom these traits caused to pursue the meanings of the Allegorical verse *(Mutashābihāt)*. They then pray for His mercy in both the worlds which will maintain their Belief *(Imān)* in the Principle *(Muhkam)* verses.

This Supplication *(du'ā)* is of great importance and should be made continuously. There have been many who have fallen prey to devious groups and themselves deviated to the extent that they were left without their Belief *(Imān)*.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says in a narration of Muslim that the hearts of men are totally within the control of Allāh, Who may do with them as He pleases. Then he made the following Supplication *(du'ā)*, "Oh Allāh, the Changer of hearts, turn our hearts to Your obedience." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 20]*

The second supplication *(du'ā)* of those possessing sound knowledge is, *"Our Lord, surely You shall gather mankind together on a day wherein there is no doubt. Surely Allāh never fails to meet a tryst."* In this supplication they are expressing that their most urgent need will occur on the Day of Judgment and are actually begging His help on that fateful day.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَن تُغْنِىَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
هُمْ وَقُودُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٠﴾ كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَأَخَذَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿١١﴾

(10) Verily the riches and the progeny of the disbelievers shall not avail them at all against Allāh. These people will be the fuel of the fire. (11) Their ways are just like the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and those before them. They falsified Our revelations, so Allāh seized them for their sins. Allāh is severe in punishment.

WEALTH AND PROGENY WILL BE OF NO AVAIL IN THE HEREAFTER

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* boast about their wealth and progeny, thinking that these will be of benefit to them. Though they may be partially right concerning this world but in the Hereafter, these will be totally useless to them. Allāh expresses their illusion in Surah Saba, *"They say, 'We possess more wealth and children and will not be punished."* [*Surah 34, verse 35*]

None of their wealth shall accompany them to the Hereafter and even if it could, it will be of no use, as Allāh says later in the Surah Āl Imrān (verse 91), *"Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, not even the world full of gold will ever be accepted from them if they wish to ransom their souls thereby. These people will experience a most painful chastisement and shall have none to assist them."*

The above was with regard to the uselessness of wealth. As for one's offspring, Allāh says in Surah Abas, "The day when a man shall flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his spouse and his children. Every one of them shall be in such a predicament that will make him oblivious of another." [*Surah 80, verses 34 to 37*]

To entertain hopes that one's wealth and family will benefit in the Hereafter as they did in this world is sheer foolishness and wishful thinking. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* are destined for Hell and will serve to fuel it. Those who chose disbelief *(kufr)* after the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم behave just like the people of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. Due to their falsification of Allāh's revelation and sinful behaviour, they were seized in His grip of chastisement in both worlds.

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ سَتُغْلَبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿١٢﴾ قَدْ
كَانَ لَكُمْ ءَايَةٌ فِى فِئَتَيْنِ ٱلْتَقَتَا ۖ فِئَةٌ تُقَٰتِلُ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَأُخْرَىٰ
كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُم مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَأْىَ ٱلْعَيْنِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿١٣﴾

(12) Say to those who disbelieve, "You shall be vanquished and gathered in Hell, which is the worst of beddings." (13) Indeed there was a sign for you in two groups which met. One group fought in the way of Allāh and the other were disbelievers, who saw them as twice their number with their very eyes. Allāh strengthens with His aid whomsoever He wills. Truly in this is a lesson for those with foresight.

THE JEWS ARE ADVISED TO TAKE A LESSON FROM THE INCIDENT AT BADR

It is reported in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.94*) from a narration of Bayhaqi that Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه said that after the victory at Badr, the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gathered the Jews in the marketplace of the Jewish tribe of Banu Qaynuqa. He addressed them thus, "Oh Jews, accept Islām before you suffer the adversity suffered just now by the Quraish." They responded by saying, "Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, do not be beguiled by your victory over some inexperienced people who do not know the art of warfare. By Allāh! If you should fight us, you will find out who we are." In response to this statement, Allāh revealed this verse telling them that they shall also soon be defeated and killed in this very world and receive the grotesque punishment of Hell. Their threats are all hollow and futile.

THE AUDACITY OF THE JEWS

In spite of their insolence the Jews were finally crushed. The Banu Quraiza were killed and the Banu Nadhīr were exiled to Khaybar. Thereafter the Muslim conquered all their forts of Khaybar and struck an agreement with them that they will continue working the fields and send a stipulated amount to the Muslims.

Later, during the period of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, they were even expelled from Khaybar. This was their defeat in this world and in the Hereafter there awaits only Hell for them.

THE SCENE AT BADR

Allāh depicts the battle of Badr as a lesson for the Jews as to how the Muslims conquer the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. The Muslim army fighting in the way of Allāh comprised 313 soldiers of whom 77 were from the Muhājirīn *(Makkan immigrants)* and the other 236 were from the Ansār of Madinah. The Muslim army had only 70 camels and every three soldiers were required to ride and graze one camel in turn. In addition to this they had only two horses, six coats of armour and eight swords. They travelled a hundred miles over mountainous terrain to reach Badr.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* army numbered three times that of the Muslims. They comprised 900 fighting soldiers excluding the women who went with them. With great pomp and glamour they sang and danced, carrying with them much supplies and weapons in addition to their 700 camels and 100 horses.

The end result of the battle was that 70 disbelievers *(kuffār)* were killed while a further 70 were taken captive. Only six of the immigrants *(Muhājirīn)* and eight Ansār met their martyrdom. Allāh assisted the Muslims in numerous ways, the one being that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* saw them as double their figure.

Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"And recall the time when you met, Allāh made them seem little to you and reduced your number in their eyes, so that Allāh may bring to pass a matter that He had already decreed."* [*Surah 8, verse* 44] By reconciling these two verses it is gathered that before the battle, Allāh made the Muslims appear smaller than their actual size so that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* would not grow despondent and flee the battlefield. Once the battle commenced, He made them seem double their size so that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* now lost courage and fought with less vigour. On the other hand, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* army seemed smaller to the Muslims so that they would take courage and fight

with more enthusiasm. This has been explained in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.283*) and in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2, p.96*).

It could also be said that the Muslims saw the disbelievers *(kuffār)* as being double their size. In this case it would still mean that they saw them as being less because in actual fact they were three times their size. In this way also they would take courage because Allāh says to the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, *"If there be from you one hundred perseverant ones they can vanquish two hundred."* [*Surah Anfāl, verse 66*]

"Allāh strengthens with His aid whomsoever He wills." Allāh allowed an ill-equipped army of 313 to defeat a well-equipped army of a thousand that possessed all the necessary means. The Jews, instead of taking heed, chose to do the opposite and suffered as a result. If a person chooses to blind himself, he will only destroy himself.

"Truly in this is a lesson for those with foresight." This verse explains that the Jews did not utilise any foresight in the matter and turned a blind eye to the warning. If they had exercised their faculties of understanding, they would have perceived this great miracle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and become Muslims.

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَآبِ ﴿١٤﴾

(14) Beautified for mankind has been made the love of joys from women, children, large heaps of gold and silver, branded horses, livestock and plantations. These are the comforts of the worldly life and with Allāh is a most excellent abode.

THE COMFORTS OF THE WORLD HAVE BEEN MADE ATTRACTIVE TO MAN

This verse briefly mentions some of the attractive things of the world which people feel they have to forsake when accepting Islām. This was one of the factors that prevented the Jews from accepting Islām. This perception is based on ignorance. Although a person might experience some difficulties initially (which are actually a test), he shall receive even more by virtue of his Belief *(Imān)*.

Many things of desire have been mentioned in this verse and usually a person possessing these are considered to be of some standing and authorities. However, these are prone to be of limited benefit only for a while in this world and it shall only be Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds that will avail one in the Hereafter. For this reason Allāh states further, *"These are the comforts of the worldly life and with Allāh is a most excellent abode."*

".....large heaps of gold and silver..." The Arabic word "qintār" refers to a large fortune of wealth. It is further used in conjunction with the adjective

"muqantara" which emphasises its huge proportions considerably. it is reported that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked regarding the meaning of "qintār", he mentioned twelve thousand "Awqiya" (*one Awqiya equals 40 Dirhams*).

"..... *branded horses...*" The Arabs used to brand their horses, called "musawwama." Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that this word refers to horses that are left in the fields for grazing. According to Sayyidina Mujahid رحمة الله عليه, these are such horses that are very healthy and beautiful.

"*.....livestock and plantations.*" Livestock is defined by the Arabic word "an'ām" which refers to camels, goats, cattle, etc. Normally a person who owns a large number of these animals is regarded as one of a high stranding. When this person's animals go out early in the morning to graze and then return again in their large droves in the evening, he watches them proudly and thinks nothing of anyone else. Allāh refers to this in Surah Nahl "*In them is beauty for you when you return them in the evenings and when you send them out in the morning.*" [*Surah 16, verse6*]

The last thing mentioned is fields of crops and plantations. The farmer is also intoxicated by the sight of his large fields and swells with pride over them. The people of the world are infatuated by their worldly possessions. On the other hand, those concerned for the Hereafter apply themselves to acquire only the Hereafter. The following verse draws the attention of these worldly ones towards the Hereafter.

قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُم بِخَيْرٍ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾ الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْمُنفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ ﴿١٧﴾

(15) Say, "Shall I inform you of something better than that? For those who fear (Allāh) are gardens by their Lord, beneath which rivers flow wherein they shall abide forever; and pure spouses and Allāh 's pleasure. Allāh sees His bondsmen." (16) Those who say, "O our Lord, verily we believe, so pardon us our sins and guard us from the punishment of the fire." (17) The patient, the truthful, the obedient, the charitable and those who beg forgiveness in the early hours.

THE BOUNTIES OF THE PIOUS IN THE HEREAFTER

After mentioning the coveted things of this world in the previous verse, Allāh now mentions the bounties of the Hereafter which are much more superior. These, however will not be for everyone. These are reserved for those

possessing piety, the best form of which is to abstain from disbelief *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* and to accept Belief. Without Belief, no good deed is accepted, nor can one attain piety .

Piety *(Taqwa)* also involves abstaining from all major and minor sins, as well as avoiding things that are classified as Makrūh Tahrimi or Makrūh Tanzihi and things that are doubtful. For those possessing piety, Allāh promises gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein they will live until eternity. With that they shall also enjoy the company of such spouses who are pure. (The meaning of 'pure" has passed in the 25th verse of Surah Baqarah.)

THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH

This shall be the greatest boon to these people in the Hereafter. The pleasure of Allāh is indeed the best thing any person can wish for since it encapsulates all other bounties and blessings. It is mentioned in Surah Tauba (*verse* 72), "The pleasure of Allāh is the greatest." The verse is oft repeated, *"Allāh is pleased with them and they with Him."* A slave cannot aspire for anything greater than the pleasure of his master.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم related that Allāh shall summon the people of Heaven *(Jannah)*, to which they will reply, *"O our Lord, we are present and ever ready to enact Your instructions for all good is with You."* Allāh shall ask them whether they are happy, to which they shall say, *"O our Lord, how can we not be happy when You have given us what You had not given any other of Your creation?"* Allāh will ask them, *"Should I not confer on you something better?"* They will respond by saying, *"O our Lord, what can be better than this?"* Allāh will tell them, *"I shall confer my pleasure upon you and I shall henceforth never be displeased with you."* [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

After mentioning the bounties to be enjoyed by these pious people, Allāh then speaks of their prayer *(du'ā)* for forgiveness and safety from Hell, followed by their description. They are *"The patient, the truthful, the obedient, the charitable and those who beg forgiveness in the early hours.*

"The patient... "This quality receives precedence because it includes all good, as was discussed in the verse, *"Seek help with patience and Salāh."* [*Surah Baqarah, verses 45 and 153*] It was stated that "Sabr" *(patience)* is of three types. The first is to be steadfast on good actions, the second is to abstain from sins and the third is to persevere through hardships. A believer requires this quality in every aspect of his life and in every action.

"...the truthful... " A person who is true in his Belief *(Imān)* can never be a hypocrite and one who is true in his speech will never lie. In the same way, one who is true in his deeds will perform them well and one who is true in his intentions shall rectify all his actions. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"Those who come forth with the truth and testify thereby, these are indeed the people of piety (taqwa)."* [*Surah 39, verse 33*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Remain steadfast upon the truth for it leads to all good, and this leads one to Heaven *(Jannah)*. A person continues being truthful until he is

recorded by Allāh to be amongst the Siddiqīn (the very truthful ones). Stay away from lies for they surely lead to sin, and this sin leads one to Hell. A person continuously lies until he is recorded by Allāh to be amongst the Kadhāb *(the extremely untruthful)*. [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

"*...the obedient...*" These include all those who carry out acts of worship and abstain from all sins.

"*.......the charitable...*" This verifies the great virtue of spending in charity since such charitable people are included in the ranks of the pious possessors of piety *(taqwa)*. Being charitable is not related to being wealthy, but depends upon the person's desire for reward in the Hereafter. Many wealthy people have no desire for the Hereafter, so they do not even spend in charity while many a poor person spends in the way of Allāh despite his straitened conditions.

"*....and those who beg forgiveness in the early hours.*" This is a special quality of the pious. Sayyidina Abu Umama رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Remain steadfast with the night Salāh (*Tahajjud*) because it was the habit of the pious people before you. It is a means of gaining proximity to your Lord, an expiation from sins and a means for abstaining from them." [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم is also reported to have said, "When the last third of the night remains Allāh announces, *"Who will make any supplication (du'ā) that I may accept his supplication (du'ā)? Who will ask for something that I may grant it to him? Who is it that seeks pardon from Me that I may pardon him?"* [*Bukhari, v.1, p.153*]

THE VIRTUE OF WAKING AT NIGHT

Sayyidina Amr bin Ubaid رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "A servant draws closest to Allāh during the final hours of the night, so if you can manage it, be of those who remember Allāh at this time." [*Tirmidhi*] The Qur'ān also mentions many virtues of waking at night to engage in acts of worship. Allāh says in Surah Dhāriyāt, *"Verily the pious shall dwell in gardens and springs, taking from that which their Lord had given them. Without doubt they were good doers from afore. They used to sleep little at night and would beg pardon in the early hours."* [*Surah 51, verses 15 to 18*]

شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًۢا بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿18﴾ إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمُ ۗ وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿19﴾ فَإِنْ حَآجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِ ۗ وَقُل
لِّلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْأُمِّيِّـۧنَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ۚ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا۟ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَوا۟ ۖ وَّإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟
فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿20﴾

(18) Allāh (Himself) testifies that there is no deity save Him, and (so do) the angels and men of learning; maintaining with justice, there is no other deity besides Him, The Almighty, The Wise. (19) Definitely the only Dīn *(religion)* with Allāh is Islām. Those who were given the scripture from before only differed after the knowledge came to them because of animosity between themselves. Whosoever disbelieves in the revelations of Allāh, verily Allāh is swift in taking account. (20) If they argue with you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] tell them, "I have surrendered myself to the obedience of Allāh and (so have) those who follow me." Say to those who have been given the scripture and to the unlettered ones, "Have you surrendered to the obedience of Allāh?" If they surrender then surely they are rightly guided, and if they turn away then your duty is only to convey. Allāh sees His bondsmen.

THE TESTIMONY OF ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)*

It is narrated in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.104*) and "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.285*) from Kalbi رحمة الله عليه that two Jewish scholars from Syria came to Madinah. Upon arrival, the one said to the other that this city is exactly as we read in the scriptures as being the resident city of the final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When they met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they recognised him to be as they had read and enquired, "Are you Muhammad?" When they received an affirmative reply, they asked further, "Are you Ahmad?" When they again received a positive answer, they said, "We wish to question you concerning a certain testimony which, if you reply correctly, we will believe in you and attest to your Prophethood." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them to pose their question, to which they said, "Tell us what is the greatest testimony in the book of Allāh?" Upon this the above verse was revealed viz. *"Allāh (Himself) testifies that there is no deity save Him, and (so do) the angels and men of learning..."* On hearing this, both of them accepted Islām.

In this verse Allāh Himself, together with His angels bear testimony to His divinity. These angels are Allāh's chosen bondsmen whom He has protected from committing any sins. Many of them are forever in His presence and recognise His divinity. Together with them are the "men of learning."

WHO ARE "THE MEN OF LEARNING"?

The *"men of learning"* are all the Prophet عليه السلام and all those who followed them. They all recognised the divinity of Allāh by way of His signs and proofs. They realise that He is the One and Only Being worthy to be worshipped.

It is understood from this that those who are involved in researching various creations of Allāh cannot be called men of learning unless they perceive the divinity of Allāh. Those who cannot do this remain ignorant despite their exhaustive efforts in research. Surah Zumar contains the verse, which states, *"Say, 'Oh ignorant ones! Do you command me to worship others besides Allāh?"* [Surah 39, verse 64] This verse terms these people as ignorant people even though they were the most eloquent in their time.

".... maintaining with justice..." With His perfect system of equity and justice, Allāh passes Judgment between His servants in both worlds. He does not oppress in the least, and it is only those who have no concept of the meaning of

justice who object to His Judgment.

"...there is no other deity besides Him, The Almighty, The Wise. This emphasises what was said in the beginning of the verse concerning oneness of Allāh *(Tauhid)*.

ONLY ISLĀM IS RECOGNISED BY ALLĀH

"Definitely the only Dīn (religion) with Allāh is Islām." Islām is the only way to salvation and any person who rejects this Dīn *(religion)* cannot attain success, despite his belief in the unity of Allāh. Allāh says towards the end of this Surah, *"Whoever follows a Dīn (religion) other than Islām, it will never be accepted from him.* [*verse 85*]

The literal meaning of Islām is 'obedience' and 'submission.' It refers to the Dīn *(religion)* that Allāh prescribed for His servants because they submit to His obedience outwardly and inwardly with their body and souls.

Every Prophet عليه السلام preached the Deen *(religion)* of Islām and their followers were termed Muslims. The final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also preached this Dīn *(religion)* and the same Dīn *(religion)* shall prevail till Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Whoever shall follow it is termed a Muslim and will attain salvation, while the rejecters are infidels *(kuffār)*.

The root word of 'Islām' denotes peace in both worlds from all problems and punishment. Much has already been said in this regard in certain verses of Surah Baqarah viz. *"Verily those who believe and those who are Jews, Christians or Sabians."* [*verse 62*] and 'When his (*Ibrahīm's*) Lord told him submit!" [*verse 131*]

The differences between the Jews and the Christians and their opposition to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not because of ignorance, but took place with their full knowledge. They recognised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be the final Prophet but their obstinate nature prevented them from accepting. Their hankering after the things of this world also served as an obstacle to their accepting. For this attitude, they incurred upon themselves Allāh's chastisement and He says, *"Whosoever disbelieves in the revelations of Allāh, verily Allāh is swift in taking account."*

"If they argue with you (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم *tell them, 'I have surrendered myself to the obedience of Allāh and (so have) those who follow me."* Those who choose not to believe will have to suffer their own punishment and the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* cannot be expected to help them.

"Say to those who have been given the scripture and to the unlettered ones, 'Have you surrendered to the obedience of Allāh?' If they surrender, then surely they are rightly guided, and if they turn away then your duty is only to convey." One cannot force these people to accept, but can merely advise them. Inviting them towards Islām is the duty of the Muslim.

"Allāh sees His bondsmen." The Muslim, infidel *(kāfir)*, inviter and rejecter accept this fact and none can expect his actions to go unnoticed.

(21) Surely those who disbelieve in the revelation of Allāh and wrongfully slay Prophet and slay those from mankind who enjoin justice, give them the tidings of a most painful chastisement. (22) They are the ones whose actions have been wasted in the world and in the Hereafter, and they shall have none to assist them.

THE WARNING OF PENDING PUNISHMENT FOR THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

This verse warns all disbelievers *(kuffār)* of punishment, be they Jews, Christians or anything else. Specific mention is made of the Jews who used to kill Prophet عليه السلام. The inference is also to the Jews in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because, although they did not actually carry out the actions of their forefathers, they did not disassociate themselves from the actions of their predecessors.

Such people will also suffer this chastisement who murdered those who enjoined others with justice. It is not farfetched for them to murder the followers of a Prophet since they kill Prophet themselves. Regarding each of these people Allāh says, *"give them the tidings of a most painful chastisement."*

The giving of tidings is usually for something joyous. It has been used in this context because these people thought that the outcome of their sinful deeds will be good and expected Allāh' s mercy while they sinned. The verse tells them that they will now not receive the favourable things that they anticipated, but they would receive the tidings of a punishment instead.

"Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.109*) reports from Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abi Hātim that Sayyidina Abu Ubaidah bin Jarāh رضى الله عنه asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which persons shall receive the most grievous punishment on the Day of Judgment. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that it shall be the person who killed a Prophet or killed someone who enjoined good and forbade evil. Thereafter Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse and added, "Oh Abu Ubaidah رضى الله عنه, the Bani Isrā'īl in a single morning murdered 43 Prophet. Some 170 worshippers rose from them to prevent them and to enjoin good, but by the same evening all of these worshippers were also killed."

THE ACTIONS OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* ARE ALL WASTED

"They are the ones whose actions have been wasted in the world and in the Hereafter, and they shall have none to assist them." Their lives will not be safe in this

world and they shall not deserve accolades for their actions here. Even in the Hereafter, their actions shall not avail them since these will be bereft of reward and incapable of offering any security from Hell. There shall be none to render them any assistance or intercession. Of course, this refers to their good actions, since the evil deeds can do them no good whatsoever.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۖ وَغَرَّهُمْ فِي دِينِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَاهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

(23) Have you not seen how those who have been given a portion of the scripture are called towards Allāh's book that it may judge between them, then a group from them flagrantly turn away? (24) This is because they say, "The fire shall never touch us except for a limited number of days." The things that they fabricate have deceived them in their Dīn (religion). (25) What will be their condition when We gather them for a day wherein there is no doubt and every soul is paid in full and they shall not be oppressed?

THE JEWS' AVERSION TO ALLĀH'S BOOK AND THEIR WISHFUL THINKING

It is narrated in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.110*) from Ibn Is'hāq رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once went to the Baitul Midrās (the religious and educational centre of the Jews in Madinah) where many Jews were gathered. There he invited them towards Islām.

Amongst them were two people by the names of Nu'man bin Amr and Harith bin Zaid, who asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whose Dīn *(religion)* he followed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that he followed the Dīn *(religion)* of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. They argued that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a Jew, to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them to bring a copy of the Torah to decide the matter between them. They were reluctant to do so and were averse to the idea of letting it be a judge between them. On this occasion, Allāh revealed the above verse stating that when they are summoned to let the book of Allāh decide between them, a faction from them turn back, refusing to accept the truth.

THE HOPES OF THE JEWS AND THEIR IDEAS

The reason for their aversion to the truth is given as the fact that they are trapped in their own fabricated ideas. They console themselves with the idea that they will only remain in Hell for a few days. Some commentators are of the opinion these few days of punishment tally with the number of days that their forefathers worshipped the calf. This idea of theirs is steeped in ignorance because no person can possibly endure even a single minute in Hell. These ideas

and concepts of theirs had beguiled them and earned them punishment, as Allāh says, *"The things that they fabricate (have) deceived them in their Dīn (religion)."*

They possess no authorisation from Allāh for this fabricated idea of theirs and they have no guarantee that they will emerge from Hell after the expected period of time. Their rejection of the Dīn *(religion)* warrants their eternal punishment, but they still maintained their vain presumptions about salvation.

They also claimed that being the children of the Prophet عليه السلام, they shall be rescued from the punishment of the Hereafter. Some even make the preposterous claim that Allāh promised Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام that his progeny will not be punished and that they will only have to pass over Hell. Verse 18 of Surah Mā'idah states, "The Jews and the Christians say, *'We are the children of Allāh and His loved ones!' Say, 'Then why will He punish you for your sins? You are only humans of those that He created. He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. To Allāh belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and unto Him is the return."* [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v3, p.111*]

قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ مَٰلِكَ ٱلْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِى ٱلْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَآءُ وَتَنزِعُ ٱلْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَآءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَآءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَآءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ ٱلْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ تُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ ۖ وَتُخْرِجُ ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلْحَىِّ ۖ وَتَرْزُقُ مَن تَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

(26) Say, "O Allāh, Owner of sovereignty, You bestow sovereignty to whom soever You please and snatch away sovereignty from whomsoever You please. You grant honour to whomsoever You please and disgrace whomsoever You please. In Your hand is all good. Verily You are Able to do all things." (27) "You enter the night into the day and enter the day into the night. You bring forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living and give sustenance to whomsoever You desire without reckoning."

ALLĀH IS THE OWNER OF ALL SOVEREIGNTY AND GIVES RESPECT AND DISGRACE TO WHOM HE WILLS

It is recorded in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.279*) from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conquered Makkah, he told the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم of their future conquests of Rome and Persia. On hearing this, the hypocrites and Jews jeered that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم seems not to be satisfied with Makkah and Madinah but is greedy to go on to conquer the great powers of Persia and Rome. On this occasion the above verse was revealed.

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make the following supplication *(du'ā)*, *"O Allāh, Owner of sovereignty, You bestow sovereignty to whomsoever You please and snatch away sovereignty form whomsoever You please. You grant honour to whomsoever You please and disgrace whomsoever You please."* This is a

supplication *(du'ā)* as well as a reference to the taunts of the disbelievers that it is Allāh who controls the affairs of the world and He gives authority to whomsoever He pleases. Allāh ended the sway of the Jews in Madinah and handed the city over to the Muslims, just as He had taken the rule of Makkah away from the Quraish. Although the Muslims were without the means, yet Allāh granted them victory over better-equipped forces. In the same way, it was Allāh who gave dominion to the Romans and the Persians and He is able to take it away from them and give it to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

These disbelievers saw only the strength and might of the enemy forces and overlooked the power of Allāh, who gave all of this to them. The One who gave it is surely able to repossess it, and He grants honour and debasement to whoever He wills.

"In Your hand is all good." Commentators mention that although all good and bad is in the control of Allāh, this verse only mentions the one factor and the opposite is understood from it. Other commentators maintain that only the good is mentioned in this verse because it is actually a supplication *(du'ā)* and every person asking in a supplication *(du'ā)* will ask only for the things which he requires (i.e. good).

"Verily You are Able to do all things." This statement serves as a summary of the entire verse. Its broad context also indicates that Allāh is Capable of doing even much more than what is mentioned earlier.

SOME DEPICTIONS OF ALLĀH'S POWER

"You enter the night into the day and enter the day into the night." At times the nights are longer than the days while at other times the opposite occurs. It often occurs that the difference in day and night may be 4 or 5 hours while at other times it can be up to 16 hours and even more. All these factors are determined solely by Allāh and none other has any jurisdiction over them.

"You bring forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living..." Commentators mention that from the lifeless womb a living being is born and from the living being a lifeless womb is again formed. Others explain it to mean that from a lifeless egg a living bird is hatched and then this bird may again lay an egg. Sayyidina Hasan and Atā رحمة الله عليه have tendered yet another explanation. They say that from a Believer *(Mu'minīn)* [*who is considered to be living due to his Belief (Imān)*] a disbeliever *(kāfir)* may be born (who is considered to be lifeless), while the opposite may also take place and a Believer *(Mu'minīn)* is born to a disbeliever *(kāfir)*. Allāh says, *"Can the one who was dead then revived by Us and given a light whereby he treads, be like the one who is in darkness and cannot emerge there from?"* [*Surah An'ām, verse 122*]

"......and (You) give sustenance to whomsoever You desire without reckoning." The granting of provision is His responsibility, which He may designate as He pleases. As He gives without stint, He may also restrict. Allāh says in numerous verses of the Qur'ān, *"Your Lord lavishes sustenance for whomsoever He wills and straitens."*

لَا يَتَّخِذِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ فِى شَىْءٍ إِلَّآ أَن تَتَّقُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ تُقَىٰةً ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسَهُۥ ۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

(28) The believers should not take the disbelievers as friends in preference to believers. Whoever does so has no connection with Allāh, unless you have to safeguard yourselves from enemies. Allāh bids you to beware of Him and unto Allāh is the return.

MUSLIMS ARE COMMANDED NOT TO BEFRIEND THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

This verse clearly prohibits the preference of disbelievers *(kāfir)* friends over Muslim friends, warning that the perpetrator of this act shall have severed all ties with Allāh. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.291*) reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه that this verse was revealed with regard to Abdullāh bin Ubayy and his fellow hypocrites. They used to befriend the idolaters and Jews, passing information on to them concerning the Muslims with the hope that the disbelievers *(kāfir)* would eventually overcome the Muslims. With regard to this, the verse was revealed to warn Muslims not to emulate this practice.

It is also narrated from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه that some Jews befriended certain persons of the Ansār with the objective of displacing them from Islām. Although many other Muslims warned them of this ploy, they refused to listen and continued their friendship. Eventually this verse was revealed.

Other verses of the Qur'ān also prohibit the befriending of disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Allāh says in Surah Mumtahina, *"O you who believe, choose not My enemy and your enemy as friends, passing on messages of friendship to them when they disbelieve in that truth which has come to you. They exile you and the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *only because you believe in Allāh and His Messenger. When you fight in My way, seeking My pleasure, you secretly send messages of friendship to them. I am best Aware of all that you hide and all that you reveal. Whoever from you does so, then he has definitely strayed from the right path. If they ever gain the upper hand over you they shall be your foes and will stretch out their arms and tongues to you with evil intent, and they long for you to disbelieve."* [*Surah 60, verses 1 and 2*]

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEFRIENDING THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

Nowadays Muslims are totally oblivious to the prohibition stated in this verse and continue preferring disbelievers *(kuffār)* as friends over other Muslims. Ignoring their personal welfare, they give precedence to their worldly benefits and do not even consider befriending Muslims instead. Some Muslim even become informants to foreign disbelievers *(kuffār)* nations. It is indeed sad that Muslims have mutual enmity between themselves, but friendship with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

This tragic state of affairs has made the Muslim countries puppets of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. To attain the academic degrees of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, some Muslims "scholars" write various theses, the topics of which are selected by their disbeliever *(kāfir)* seniors. Such topics are chosen whereby the unassuming Muslim is made to disclose the innermost secrets of Islāms which include those of Muslim institutes and establishments. These people are, in reality, traitors of Islām and friends of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

Some people consider this Qur'ānic prohibition to be against etiquette and good social conduct. Healthy social conduct and heart-felt friendships are two different concepts. When there exists a heart-felt friendship with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, then a Muslim will even betray the secrets and functions of the Muslims to their disbeliever *(kāfir)* adversaries. Belief *(Imān)* demands that one reserves earnest companionship only for Muslims. Even people who appear to be pious find this injunction of the Qur'ān hard to accept, indicating that their submission to Allāh is not yet sincere.

Numerous factions and differences exist among the Muslims. Sometimes these are related to nationality, sometimes to language and sometimes to other factors. Putting aside the demands of their Belief *(Imān)*, these Muslims choose rather to accede to the dictates of disbelief *(kufr)* and align with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

Matters have reached such a low ebb that certain Muslim states even construct places of worship for the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and forgo their own Salāh for the sake of maintaining ties with them. They also participate in the ceremonies of these disbelievers *(kuffār)* and even exchange gifts with them on these occasions. This state of affairs has stripped the Muslims of their status.

Thinking that they may benefit, Muslims are indeed misleading themselves because what appears to be beneficial to them actually conceals harm within. Allāh says in a verse of Surah Imrān, *"O you who believe, take not as confidants any besides your own (Muslims) for they waste no opportunity to harm you."* [Surah 3, verse 118] The. disbelievers *(kuffār)* wish only harm to the Muslims and desire that the territories of the Muslims become theirs so that the Muslims bow at their feet. They wish to render the Muslims totally incapable of resistance.

".... in preference to believers..." This clause should not be misconstrued to mean that it is permissible to befriend the disbelievers *(kuffār)* when friendship with Muslims is still maintained. The verse rules out relationships with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. In reality, such ardent friendship is only possible with the disbelievers *(kuffār)* when relationships with Muslims are ignored, be it intentionally or coincidentally. Once a friendship is struck with a disbeliever *(kāfir)*, the relationship with a Muslim will inevitably be weakened or even destroyed.

A GRAVE WARNING TO THOSE WHO BEFRIEND THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

"Whoever does so (befriends the disbelievers *(kuffār)*) *has no connection with Allāh..."* Thereafter Allāh mentions an exception to the prohibition and allows a superficial friendship by declaring, *"...unless you have to safeguard yourselves from*

enemies." In the case where a Muslim is in genuine danger of losing either his life or any limb, he may display an external friendship if it will secure his safety. In this case it is permissible for him to say things contrary to Islām. Of course these things should only be restricted to the tongue and must not enter the heart.

"Allāh bids you to beware of Him and unto Allāh is the return." If a Muslim bears this always in mind, he will be able to abstain from all sins and not succumb to the dictates of evil.

TO WHAT EXTENT IS FRIENDSHIP WITH THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* PERMITTED?

The verse prohibits what is termed as "Muwālāt" (heartfelt friendship). However, "Muwāsāt" and "Mudārāt" are permitted. These refer to the cordial social conduct which one shows towards them e.g. Entertaining a guest, working with them in offices, trading with them, etc. However, none of this is permitted with a disbeliever *(kāfir)* in a "Dārul Harb" i.e. a disbelievers *(kuffār)* state that is engaged in war with the Muslims. Weapons cannot be sold to such states.

While it is permissible to employ a disbeliever *(kāfir)* or to accept employment from one, it will not be permitted to exercise Muwālāt with them. There should be no objection to this injunction since even the disbelievers *(kuffār)* practise the same and will never share an intimate friendship with a Muslim. Until this injunction is adhered to a Muslim cannot possibly act upon Islām properly.

In the name of friendship, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* have started a movement which has totally robbed the Muslims of their Dīn *(religion)*. They are tirelessly trying to add the Muslims to their ranks and are finding success amongst those Muslims who do not have an aversion to disbelief *(kufr)* and the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Some Muslims are ashamed of the fact that the Qur'ān prohibits Muwālāt with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. There is absolutely no reason to feel ashamed before these disbelievers *(kuffār)* since none of them will admit to possess a true affinity for a Muslim or Islām. As they behave towards us, so will we behave towards them.

A REFUTATION OF THE "TAQIYA" OF THE RAWĀFIDH

The sect called the Rawāfidh (part of the Shia movement) attaches such great importance to the practice of "Taqiya" (lying in religious matters) that a renowned proverb amongst them is that the person who does not practise Taqiya has no Belief *(Imān)*. They quote in their support the above verse, *"... unless you have to safeguard yourselves from enemies."*

At the outset it should be understood why they resorted to this practice. The Jews taught these people a Dīn *(religion)* other than that brought by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and impressed on their minds that Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه was supposed to be the immediate leader after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They were told that the other Caliphs *(Khalifas)* viz. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه usurped the Caliphate *(Khilāfah)* from him. However, true Muslims ask them the reason why Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه remained silent about the matter for 26 years, not once laying claim

to his right? Why did he, during this entire period, even participate in their meetings and fight with them in Jihād *(religion war)*? Why did he join them in all their Jumu'ah, Eid and daily Salāh? In reply to all of this they have been taught by their tutors (the Jews) to say that Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه was practising Taqiya.

This practice of *'Taqiya'* is such a weapon that the enemies have placed in their hands that they regard it as being a fundamental of Dīn *(religion)* and use it in every defence. When they deliberately say many things that contradict their beliefs, they actually feel that they are doing an act of virtue. How vast is the difference between their cowardly practice of *'Taqiya'* and the outstanding courageousness of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه whom they claim to follow!

It is not the trait of people of Belief *(Imān)* to falter before falsehood. If indeed it was the right of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه to ascend to the Caliphate *(Khilāfah)*, he would have fought for the truth and not given in to the other three Khulafa. It is not conceivable that the vicegerent of the greatest Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should yield to the authority of any oppressor.

To view the matter from another angle, the incident of Sayyidina Husain رضى الله عنه should be examined. When the Rawāfidh summoned him to Kufa and then deserted him, he chose to fight to the end for the sake of the truth. He even had to endure the killing of so many of his family members, but he never yielded to the pressure of those whom he considered to be oppressive. He could have practiced *'Taqiya'* to appease Yazid and *Ibn* Ziyād, but he did not.

This episode clearly displays the fact that there exists no *'Taqiya'* in the Dīn *(religion)*, for it was not even practised by people like Sayyidina Husain رضى الله عنه whom these Shias claim to follow. Whatever incidents the Shias narrate regarding the *'Taqiya'* of their "Scholar's *(Imāms)*" are all fabrications and contradict the status of these noble personalities. It is just not possible that they conceal one thing in their hearts and practice another. This practice of *'Taqiya'* has no basis from the Qur'ān whatsoever.

"...unless you have to safeguard yourselves from enemies." This verse applies to the case when a Muslim is in danger of suffering harm from the disbelievers infidels *(kuffār)* e.g. they force him to make any statement of infidelity *(kufr)* under a threat, which they are able to induce and which shall prove unbearable to the Muslim in question. This is as Allāh says in Surah Nahl (*verse 106*), *"...save for him who is forced, but his heart is content with Belief (Imān)."* Even in this case, however, it will be best to endure the suffering and not concede.

Their quoting this verse for their support is also unjustified since they are the very people who believe that the Qur'ān we possess is adulterated and incomplete. How is it possible that one who does not accept a thing uses it to lend support to his belief. They should, at the very least, present a hadith of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه himself which has an authentic chain of narrators.

قُلْ إِن تُخْفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمْهُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ

مُحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِن سُوٓءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُۥٓ أَمَدًۢا بَعِيدًا ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
نَفْسَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣٠﴾

(29) Say, "Whether you hide or reveal what is in your bosoms, Allāh knows it. He knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and Allāh is Able to do all things." (30) On the day when every soul shall find all the good which it had done present before it. It will wish that there be a great space of distance between it and the evil which it perpetrated. Allāh bids you to beware Of Himself, and Allāh is Clement unto His bondsmen.

ALLĀH KNOWS EVERYTHING AND IS ABLE TO DO ANYTHING

He knows what is concealed in the depths of hearts and all that is within the heavens and the earth. A Being whose knowledge is so vast deserves to be feared and exalted.

THE ANGUISH OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYAMAH)*

The depiction of the Day of Judgment given in this verse is that every soul shall be confronted by its actions. People will wish that this day had never come and that they be far removed there from. For this reason it is necessary for every person to concern himself with his plight on that day by increasing in his good deeds and improving them. Thereafter Allāh reiterates the statement made in a previous verse viz. *"Allāh bids you to beware of Himself"*

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿٣١﴾ قُلْ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ ۖ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(31) Say (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, "If you love Allāh then follow me, Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." (32) Say, "Obey Allāh and the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم." If they turn away then surely Allāh loves not the disbelievers.

FOLLOW THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IF YOU LOVE ALLĀH

Both these verses encourage obedience to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which entails carrying out all his instructions. It refers to following in his footsteps and adopting his path. The various sects that claim to love Allāh are urged in this verse to prove their love in the way stipulated by Allāh and not merely by verbal claims. This is by adopting the lifestyle of Allāh's the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. By doing this, a person will earn the reciprocal love of Allāh and thereby acquire success in both the worlds.

Together with the order to emulate, the instruction to obey is also given and the person who turns away from this is termed to be a infidel in the verse, whom Allāh likes not. This obedience applies to all facets beliefs, obligations

(Farāidh) and compulsories *(Wājibāt)*. To reject an obligation is also infidelity, but not to act on it without rejecting its obligation is an act termed *"kufr Amali"* (infidelity in actions).

A WARNING TO THE CLAIMANTS OF DIVINE LOVE

This verse emphasises the fact that those who claim to love Allāh but do not accept the Islām brought by Allāh's most beloved creation, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will not be included in the list of His loved ones. Their claims are thus in vain and totally wasted.

The verse also serves as a reminder to those Muslims who claim to love Allāh, but neglect to follow in his footsteps. Their businesses are Unlawful *(Harām)*, but they claim to love Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They are clean-shaven, yet they claim to love Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They even dress like the infidels *(kuffār)* and run the affairs of their countries according to the laws of the infidels and each time claim to love Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. All this amounts to deception and false claims.

A REFUTATION OF THE REJECTERS OF HADITH

Approximately sixty or seventy years ago, a group sprung up claiming to be followers of the Qur'ān only and denied the following of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be a constituent of Dīn *(religion)*. They made the preposterous claim that Allāh sent the Qur'ān to mankind just like a person sends a letter to another, and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم merely served the purpose of a postman whose job is confined to delivery. They claim that they are able to understand Allāh's message without the necessity of an explanation from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. (May Allāh save us from such blasphemy. Āmīn.)

In saying such things, these people are denying all the verses of the Qur'ān which exhort the following of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in Surah Nahl (*verse 44*), *"We revealed the Reminder (Qur'ān) to you so that you may explain to the people what has been revealed unto them and that they may reflect." He says further in Surah Nisā (verse 105), "Undoubtedly We have revealed to you the Book with the truth so that you may judge between people by that which Allāh has shown you."*

These verses show that it was also the duty of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to explain the verses of the Qur'ān. The person who wishes to understand the Qur'ān without the agency of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم shall indeed wander very far from it and become a follower of his own baser self.

Explaining ,the attributes of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says *"He permits for them the pure things, forbids them from the impure things and removes from them the burden and shackles which were upon them."* [*Surah A'rāf, verse 157*]

Those who choose to practise the Qur'ān without resorting to the Ahādīth are really following their own souls and desire freedom. In denying the Ahādīth, they are also denying the Qur'ān and these people have fallen prey to the devices of the infidels *(kuffār)*. If they did follow the Qur'ān, they would have surely followed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and not the dictates of their western

masters in Europe and America.

With regard to the Qur'ān, the Qur'ān itself should decide the matter. It does not classify itself as a mere letter but declares that it is, *"A guidance for mankind and clear signs of guidance and a Discerner (between right and wrong)."* [*Surah Baqarah, verse 185*] The Qur'ān was revealed because the mere intelligence of man is insufficient to guide him. Together with this, Allāh also sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as an elucidator and commentator of the Qur'ān. Consequently, the order was given that he should be followed in his explanation. If every person was allowed to interpret the Qur'ān as he pleased, there would be innumerable explanations to every verse and the glorious word of Allāh would be no more than a toy.

These ignorant people have reliance on the Qur'ān, yet are not ashamed to make the Revealer of this Qur'ān a target for their objections. He is the Owner and Creator of everything and none should be dissatisfied if He wished that the injunctions of the Qur'ān should be explained by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ وَنُوحًا وَءَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَءَالَ عِمْرَٰنَ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿33﴾ ذُرِّيَّةًۢ بَعْضُهَا مِنۢ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿34﴾ إِذْ قَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ عِمْرَٰنَ رَبِّ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِى بَطْنِى مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿35﴾ فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّى وَضَعْتُهَآ أُنثَىٰ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ وَلَيْسَ ٱلذَّكَرُ كَٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۖ وَإِنِّى سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّىٓ أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿36﴾ فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنۢبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا ٱلْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزْقًا ۖ قَالَ يَٰمَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿37﴾

(33) Certainly Allāh preferred Ādam, Nūh and the family of Ibrahīm over the entire universe. (34) They were descendants of each other. Allāh is The All Hearing, The All Knowing. (35) When the wife of Imrān said, "Oh my Lord, I avow to You what is in my belly to be free, so accept it from me. Verily only You are The All Hearing, The All Knowing." (36) When she delivered the child she said, "My Lord, I have delivered a girl"; and Allāh knows best what she delivered. A male is not like a female. "I will name her Maryam and I seek Your protection for her and for her offspring from the accursed Devil (Shaytān)." (37) Her Lord accepted her with full acceptance, granted her an exceptional upbringing and placed her in the custody of Zakariyya. Whenever Zakariyya went into the sanctuary wherein she was, he found food by her. He said, "Oh Maryam, from where did you get this?" She replied, "It is from Allāh. Allāh provides for whom He pleases without stint."

THE VOW OF THE MOTHER OF MARYAM عليها السلام, HER UPBRINGING AND APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIANSHIP

"Certainly Allāh preferred Ādam, Nūh and the family of Ibrahīm over the entire universe. They were descendants of each other." Every human is the descendant of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, who was followed by Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, and then much later came Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Allāh granted Prophethood to all three of the above and then all the consequent Prophet عليه السلام were of their progeny, including the seal of all, Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. The family of Imrān عليه السلام was also from these.

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and she was the daughter of Sayyidina Imrān عليه السلام. This was not the same Imrān who was the father of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, but another. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" *(v.1, p.246)* records that there was a time lapse of 1800 years between the two.

Mention is then made of the vow which the wife of Sayyidina Imrān عليه السلام took wherein she said that she vowed her unborn child to be free, meaning that the child would be freed for service of the Baitul Muqaddas. No worldly work will be taken from the child.

The caretakers of the Baitul Muqaddas used to be male, so when she gave birth to a girl she exclaimed in remorse, *"My Lord, I have delivered a girl!"* This she said even though *'Allāh knows best what she delivered."* Thereafter she exclaimed, to further emphasise her sorrow, that the child could not adequately perform the function of a caretaker to the Baitul Muqaddas, *"A male is not like a female."* i.e. the girl that was born was not what was expected. It could also mean that in general, females cannot serve the functions of males.

Sayyidina Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه writes that the sentence *"A male is not like a female"* is not the statement of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, but a statement within the context made by Allāh. In this case the verse will be interpreted to mean that no male child could be like (superior to) this girl to whom she gave birth. This particular girl was unprecedented and truly blessed.

After the birth and the apparent disillusionment she said, *'I will name her Maryam and I seek Your protection for her and for her offspring from the accursed Devil (Shaytān)."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in a narration of Bukhari, "Every child screams at birth because Devil *(Shaytān)* touches them, except Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and her son." According to another narration, he said, "Children scream because Devil *(Shaytān)* pokes them with his finger; except for Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and her son, both of whom Devil *(Shaytān)* could not reach." Yet another narration reports that he strikes them through the placenta with his finger. *["Rūhul Ma'āni," v.3, p.137]*

"Her Lord accepted her with full acceptance, granted her an exceptional upbringing and placed her in the custody of Zakariyya." Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that when the child was born, her mother (whose name was Hanna) wrapped her up in a cloth and took her to Baitul Muqaddas. There she placed her before the resident worshippers and narrated the entire incident to them. Since the father of the child [*Imrān* عليه السلام], who was the Scholar *(Imām)* of Baitul Muqaddas), had passed away during the pregnancy, it was not possible that he

bring her up, otherwise it was his right to do so.

The name Maryam (which means a worshipper) was kept by the mother to indicate that she was still abiding by her vow. This showed that although the child may not be able to serve the Baitul Muqaddas, she could still be a worshipper. For this reason Hanna عليها السلام brought the child to these worshippers. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" and Bayānul Qur'ān*]

All these worshippers desired to raise the child. Their leader, Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام told them that he was most deserving of raising her since he was married to the maternal aunt of the child. The others opted to draw a lot to decide the matter, so all their pens were gathered together. Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام told a child to draw out a pen from the heap, and it so happened that the one he drew out was none other than that of Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام. In this way he took her into his custody. (More details of this episode will follow shortly, Insha Allāh.)

She grew up with Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام and Allāh granted her an upbringing like no other child had. She was given her own quarters (referred to as the "*mihrāb*" in this verse). This quarter *(mihrāb)* or sanctuary is described by Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه as a high room within Baitul Muqaddas,. which she would reach by means of a stepladder. Other commentators maintain that the quarter *(mihrāb)* refers to the Mosque *(Masjid)* itself, while others interpret it in its renowned meaning (i.e. a niche in the Mosque *(Masjid)* wall facing the direction of prayers).

FRUIT FROM THE UNSEEN FOR SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام lived in the confines of the Baitul Muqaddas and Allāh provided her with fruit from the unseen. She would even receive summer fruits in winter and vice versa. Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام used to pay much attention to her and none but he would come to see her. The door would also remain closed, so he was astonished to find these fruit with her, especially since they were out of season. Therefore the verse says, *"Whenever Zakariyya went into the sanctuary wherein she was, he found food by her. He said, 'Oh Maryam, from where did you get this?' She replied, 'It is from Allāh. Allāh provides whom He pleases without stint."* This verse proves the miracles of the pious.

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُۥ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ ٱلدُّعَآءِ
(38) فَنَادَتْهُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي ٱلْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدِّقًۢا
بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ (39) قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي
غُلَٰمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ ٱلْكِبَرُ وَٱمْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ ٱللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ (40) قَالَ
رَبِّ ٱجْعَل لِّيٓ ءَايَةً قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ
كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِٱلْعَشِيِّ وَٱلْإِبْكَٰرِ (41)

(38) Then Zakariyya prayed to his Lord saying, "My Lord, grant me pure children from yourself. Without doubt You are the Hearer of all prayers. (39) So the angels called to him while he stood praying in the niche (mihrāb), "Allāh gives you glad tidings of Yahya who shall confirm the word from Allāh and (shall be) a leader, chaste and a Prophet from the righteous. (40) He said, "My Lord, how can I have a son when old age had already reached me and my wife is barren?" Allāh replied, "In this way Allāh does as He pleases. (41) He said, "My Lord, appoint for me a sign." Allāh said, "Your sign is that you shall be unable to talk to people for three days, except by indications. Remember your Lord abundantly and hymn His purity by night and day."

THE SUPPLICATION *(DU'Ā)* OF SAYYIDINA ZAKARIYYA عليه السلام FOR CHILDREN

Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام had grown extremely old and had not yet any children who could inherit his knowledge and practices, as Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"He (Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام said, 'Oh my Lord, verily my bones have weakened and my hair has turned white. My Lord, I have never been deprived by You in my prayers. I fear (the plight) of my relatives after me and my wife is barren, so grant me specially from You a successor who shall be an heir to myself and the family of Ya'qūb, and make him, Oh my Lord, pleasant."* [*Surah 19, verses 3 to 6*]

GLAD TIDINGS OF THE BIRTH OF SAYYIDINA YAHYA عليه السلام

Allāh accepted the supplication *(du'ā)*of Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام and sent an angel to convey to him the glad tidings of a son named Yahya. The child would *"confirm the word of Allāh* , who was Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. He will also be a *"leader"* in that he would be noble, forbearing, well mannered, intelligent, learned, friendly, reliant on Allāh, courageous and ever concerned about the welfare of his people. All these qualities apply to him, along with the real meaning that he shall lead and others shall follow. *("Rūhul Ma'āni")*

The final accolade given in his description is that he shall be a Prophet and from amongst the righteous ones *(sālihīn)*.

WHO ARE THE "SĀLIHĪN" *(RIGHTEOUS)*

This word is derived from the root word *"sālih,"* which denotes one who abstains from sins, performs virtuous actions and always turns to Allāh. Such people are of numerous ranks, the highest of whom are the Prophet عليه السلام since they are *"ma'sum"* innocent/(protected from committing sins).

Sayyidina Sulaiman عليه السلام made the following supplication *(du'ā)*, *"Make me, out of Your mercy, from amongst Your pious (sālihīn) bondsmen."* [*Surah Naml, verse 19*] In numerous verses of Surah Anbiya Allāh mentions that many of the Prophet عليه السلام were from amongst the Righteous *(Sālihīn)*. From these verses it is gathered that the quality of piety is indeed one of great merit and an integral part of the good people.

THE SURPRISE OF SAYYIDINA ZAKARIYYA عليه السلام AND ALLĀH'S REPLY

When he was informed of the imminent birth of a son and the child's qualities, Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام exclaimed, *"My Lord, how can I have a son when old age had already reached me and my wife is barren?"* The question may arise here that when he initially made the supplication *(du'ā)* to Allāh, he mentioned that he was aged and that his wife was barren. He made the supplication *(du'ā)* with perfect reliance on the power and might of Allāh. Now when the child is to be born, why does he seem astonished?

The commentators have written many responses to this question. One is that he wished to enquire about the method by which Allāh was to confer the child to him e.g. Was it necessary to marry another woman or not? Another interpretation is that his statement was a natural outburst as would occur to any other human upon such an occasion, while he still understood the power of Allāh completely. Yet another answer to this query is that it was made to induce a repetition of the glad tiding so as to derive additional pleasure.

"Allāh replied, 'In this way Allāh does as He pleases." Allāh is Capable of conferring children contrary to the normal trend of happenings, despite even barrenness.

When the matter was confirmed, he asked, *"My Lord, appoint for me a sign."* i.e. a sign to indicate that the child has been conceived. He requested this from Allāh because it would denote the beginning of his good fortune, for which he could increase his gratitude to Allāh. *'Allāh said, 'Your sign is that you shall be unable to talk to people for three days, except by indications."* Another verse in Surah Maryam mentions three nights as well. This means that during this time period, his tongue shall not be able to utter a word and his only means of communication would be through gestures. The only thing that would be possible for him would be the remembrance of Allāh, hence he was instructed, *"Remember your Lord abundantly and hymn His purity by night and day.*

Verse 90 of Surah Anbiya reads, "We accepted his supplication *(du'ā)*, conferred Yahya upon him and healed his wife." This verse indicates that his wife was cured and made fertile once again. Allāh is the Creator of ends as well as the means, and can create without the means also.

THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF MARRIAGE

The verse mentions that Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام was "hasūr" (translated above as *"chaste"*) i.e. He abstained from relations with women. From this verse, the followers of the Shafi school of jurisprudence deduce that it is better to remain single than to marry. According to the adherents of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, marriage is Sunnah and will even be compulsory *(Wājib)* for the person who experiences greater necessity.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated in a narration of Bukhari, "O youths! Whosoever of you possesses the means should marry for it is a medium of lowering the gaze and protecting the chastity. Those who cannot, should resort to fasting because it diminishes the passions."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also refused Sayyidina Uthmān bin Maz'ūn رضى الله عنه permission to remain single. It was unique to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام if he did not marry. Besides him all the other Prophet عليه السلام were married. Allāh says in Surah Ra'd, *"Most assuredly We have sent many messengers before you and We had apportioned for them wives and children."* [*Surah 13, verse 38*]

Tirmidhi reports a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Four things were the practice of all the Prophet عليه السلام, modesty, applying perfume, brushing the teeth and marrying."

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَٱصْطَفَىٰكِ عَلَىٰ نِسَآءِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ يَٰمَرْيَمُ ٱقْنُتِى لِرَبِّكِ وَٱسْجُدِى وَٱرْكَعِى مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

(42) When the angels said, "O Maryam, certainly Allāh has chosen you, purified you and preferred you above all the women of the world." (43) "O Maryam, obey your Lord, prostrate yourself and bow (in ruku) with those who bow."

THE ANGELS INFORM SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام OF HER SELECTION BY ALLĀH

Initially mention was made that Allāh' selected the family of Sayyidina Imrān عليه السلام over the universe. Thereafter much was related concerning the birth and history of Sayyidina Zakariyya, Maryam and Yahya عليه السلام. The above verse is the beginning of the culmination to this entire episode. Allāh now speaks of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and the glad tidings given to her with regard to the birth of her son Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes with regard to "...... *certainly Allāh has chosen you,"* that Allāh had chosen her from the beginning, blessed her, preferred her above all the boys who had been freed for the service of Baitul Muqaddas and specially favoured her with certain miracles.

"...purified you..." With regard to this he writes that Allāh purified her from all states of impurity such as menstruation and after-birth bleeding so that she may be worthy of serving the Mosque *(Masjid).* Other commentators state that Allāh had purified her from infidelity *(kufr),* sin and disobedience by means of Belief *(Imān)* and obedience.

Yet other commentators maintain that Allāh had purified her from bad morals and from an evil disposition. After making mention of all these opinions, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" states that it would be best to say that she was purified from all types of filth, be they external or internal.

THE VIRTUE OF SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام

"....and preferred you above all the women of the world. "Because of the general reference of the words, many Scholars *(Ulama)* are of the opinion that Sayyidina Maryam عليها السلام is superior in status to all other women. Others maintain that this superiority was confined to the women of her time only.

In the Ahādīth, many virtues are cited for numerous women like Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, Sayyidah Āsia عليها السلام {the wife of pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*}, Sayyidah Khadija رضى الله عنها (the first wife of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidah Fatima رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. Because of these Ahādīth, certain Scholars *(Ulama)* have mentioned that some of these noble ladies are better than others amongst them. Other Scholars *(Ulama)* have maintained silence on the issue, while others say that each possesses superiority in different facets.

THE VIRTUE OF SAYYIDAH FATIMA رضى الله عنها

Many Scholars *(Ulama)* are of the opinion that Sayyidah Fatima رضى الله عنها is the most noble of all women because she was the most beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In a narration of Bukhari the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Fatima is a part of me. What displeases her, displeases me and what hurts her, hurts me."*

It is also narrated in Bukhari (*v.1 p.5 12*) that during his final illness, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her, "Will it not please you to know that you shall be the leader of all the women of Heaven *(Jannah)* According to another narration, he said that she would be the leader of all the ladies of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*.

THE VIRTUE OF SAYYIDAH KHADIJA رضى الله عنها

She enjoys the privilege and unique status of being the first wife of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the first person to accept Islām. She also spent all her wealth for the sake of Islām. Commentators write that it is to her wealth that Allāh refers to in the verse, *"Did He not find you (Oh Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *destitute then make you wealthy?" (Made him wealthy with her wealth.)*

THE VIRTUE OF SAYYIDAH AYSHAH رضى الله عنها

She enjoys precedence over other women because she was the wife who propagated the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the most and she had an exceedingly large number of students. In the book "Al Isāba" (*v.4, p.360*), Sayyidina Atā bin Abi Rabah رحمة الله عليه mentions that Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها was the most learned person of her time. Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه mentioned that whenever any difficulty arose, they would refer the matter to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, who would always have some knowledge about the matter.

These were the virtues of Sayyidah Fatima رضى الله عنها, Sayyidah Khadija رضى الله عنها and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, all excelling in different aspects. Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام gains superiority in the fact that she was the specially appointed servant of Baitul Muqaddas, was brought up by Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام, would receive sustenance from the unseen and was the mother of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

THE VIRTUE OF SAYYIDAH ASIYA رضى الله عنها

Sayyidah Asiya رضى الله عنها was the wife of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and she enjoys

precedence in that she was a believer in an environment where Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was imposing great difficulties on those who believed. He used to lay them on the ground and have nails hammered into their hands. Allāh makes mention of her in Surah Tahrīm as an example to the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He says, *"Allāh cites the example for the believers of the wife of Pharaoh (Fir'aun). When she supplicated, 'Oh my Lord, build me a house near to You in Heaven (Jannah) and rescue me from Pharaoh (Fir'aun),and his atrocities and save me from the oppressive nation."* [*Surah 66, verse 11*]

A hadith of Bukhari (*v.1 p.532*) records that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No woman attained perfection except Maryam, the daughter of Imrān and Asiya, the wife Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*.

The virtue of Ayshah رضى الله عنها over other women is as the virtue of "Tharīd" over other types of food."

These then were the virtues and excellence of these five women from the Ahādīth. Only Allāh knows which of them enjoys overall superiority.

"Oh Maryam, obey your Lord, prostrate yourself and bow (in ruku) with those who bow." Some commentators say that Sajdah *(prostration)* is mentioned before Ruku *(bowing)* in this verse because that was how the previous nations prayed. Others mention that the verse does not stipulate sequence, but merely makes mention of the two actions.

The stipulation of the clause *"with those who bow" is* mentioned [according to Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه] because some Jews omitted to perform the Ruku *(bowing)* in their prayers, like how some of today's Muslims omit the Qaumah (intermediate posture between Ruku *(bowing)* and Sajdah *(prostration)*. The purpose of this clause is to lend emphasis to the correct performance of Salāh by emulating those who perform the Ruku *(bowing)* as well.

In my opinion, there exists a greater possibility of compromising in the posture of Ruku *(bowing)* than there is in the obligation *(Fardh)* constituents of standing and prostration *(sajdah)*. For this reason. Ruku *(bowing)* has been mentioned specially, so that no deficiency arises in this posture and the Salāh is perfect.

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَٰمَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

(44) These are of the unseen narrations that We inspire unto you [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم). You were not present with them when they cast their pens (to know) who will be the guardian of Maryam عليها السلام; and you were not present with them when they disputed.

A CLEAR PROOF TO THE APOSTLESHIP OF SAYYIDINA MUHAMMED صلى الله عليه وسلم

During the discussion concerning Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is addressed as a reminder to the Jews that he is truly the final Prophet of Allāh and the one regarding whom their scriptures prophesised. All were well aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was unlettered and could not have read about the accounts of the Jewish ancestors nor did he spend any time in the company of Jewish scholars, yet was able to accurately narrate them. This made it obvious that he received intelligence of this from no other source but divine inspiration.

Detailed accounts have thus far been given with regard to the vow of Hanna عليه السلام, the birth of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, her rearing by Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام and the various glad tidings given by the angels. The detailed narration of these episodes is a clear sign of Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, those who are not destined to be guided cannot be guided.

THE DRAWING OF LOTS FOR THE GUARDIANSHIP OF SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام

As had been mentioned earlier, when the mother of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام brought her before the worshippers of Baitul Muqaddas, they disputed with regard to who shall rear her since they all desired this good fortune for themselves. It was subsequently decided that lots be drawn despite the claim by Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام that he be allowed the privilege since he was married to the child's maternal aunt.

According to "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.296*), these worshippers numbered 29 and agreed that all their pens (bearing the owner's name) be cast into the Jordan river. The owner of the pen which did not sink (or, according to others, did not flow away) would become the guardian of the child. It so happened that only the pen of Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام remained standing upon the surface of the water as if it were upon land. According to certain commentators, his pen flowed against the tide of the water. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.3,p. .158 and Qurtubi v.4 p.85*]

Lesson: Drawing lots is permitted in the Shari'ah of Islām as well and the details are to be found in the books of jurisprudence. Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to draw lots between his wives before proceeding on a journey. Whoever's name was drawn would accompany him. [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

إِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ يَـٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ٱسْمُهُ ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ
وَجِيهًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿45﴾ وَيُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ
ٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ﴿46﴾ قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِى بَشَرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ ٱللَّهُ
يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿47﴾

(45) When the angels said, "Oh Maryam عليها السلام, indeed Allāh conveys to you the glad tidings of a word from Him. His name shall be Al Masīh, Isa the son of

Maryam and he shall be illustrious in this world and in the Hereafter and from amongst those brought near. (46) "He shall speak to people from his cradle and in his manhood, and he shall be amongst the pious." (47) She said, "Oh my Lord, how can I bear a child when no man has touched me?" He replied, "in this way Allāh creates what He wills. When He decrees a thing He merely says to it, 'Be!' and it is."

THE TIDINGS OF THE BIRTH OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام

In this verse, the angels inform Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام of the imminent birth of her son who will be called Al Masīh Isā bin Maryam and he will be created by a mere word from Allāh.

In a previous verse, Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام was described as one who *"confirms the word of Allāh,"* meaning that he confirmed Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام has been termed the *"word"* of Allāh because he was created without the agency of a father and solely by the word "kun" *("Be!")*. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni," v.3, p.160*]

He has also been termed *"Al Masīh."* It is recorded in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.301*) that this word (interpreted as '*mamsūh*' in Arabic) means that he is one who is purified from all impurities and sins. Another opinion is that Jibr'īl عليه السلام passed his wings over him and hence Devil *(Shaytān)* could not draw close to him.

According to Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه the word *"Masīh"* is interpreted as 'māsih' in Arabic, because he used to pass his hands over the ill, thereby curing them. Dajjal is also termed Masīh (meaning '*mamsūh*') because his one eye is blind, as if someone had passed their hand over it and wiped it off.

In numerous verses of the Qur'ān Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is referred to as *"the son of Maryam"* because he had no father. Those who deny the fact that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام had no father are disbelievers since they refute the testimony of the Qur'ān. May Allāh save us all from such blasphemy. Āmīn.

"... he shall be illustrious in this world and in the Hereafter... "From birth, Allāh had bestowed on him with this status and when the Jews plotted to slay him, Allāh raised him *("but Allāh raised him unto Him"*). He shall descend later to be a guide and to practice and preach the Islām of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

".......and from amongst those brought near." Like all the Prophet عليه السلام, he shall be elevated to an esteemed position close to Allāh.

THE CONFIRMATION OF SAYYIDINA YAHYA عليه السلام

When Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was conferred the mantle of Prophethood, Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام was already a Prophet and he confirmed the apostleship of his contemporary Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, thus living up to the prophesy in an earlier verse viz. *"confirms the word of Allāh."* It is reported in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p. 147*) that he was the first to believe in Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and testify that he was indeed the Word of Allāh and a spirit from Him.

Describing Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام further, Allāh says, *"He shall speak to people from his cradle and in his manhood..."*. The detailed account of the birth of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is given in Surah Maryam where it is mentioned that after giving birth to him, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام took him to her people. They were astonished to think that she could perhaps perpetrate fornication, but she merely gestured that they address the child. They exclaimed, *"How can we speak to one who is still a baby in a cradle?"* Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام then began to address them saying, *"Verily I am the servant of Allāh. He gave me a Book and made me a Prophet. He made me blessed wherever I may be and instructed me with Salāh and Zakāh as long as I live. He made me obedient to my mother and did not make me a rebellious wretch."* [*surah 19, verses 30 to 32*]

Besides speaking to people in his infancy, the verse also adds that he shall speak to them in his manhood, referring to the age between youth and old age. Some commentators maintain that the object of this verse is to elucidate that his speech during infancy and adulthood shall be the same. Others say that it was intended to inform Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام that her son shall reach the age of manhood.

"........and he shall be amongst the pious." The explanation of the word "sālih" (pious) was discussed earlier and it was mentioned that all the Prophet عليه السلام were imbued with this quality.

THE BIRTH OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام WITHOUT A FATHER

When given the glad tidings of a child, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام exclaimed in astonishment, *"Oh my Lord, how can I bear a child when no man has touched me?"* Surah Maryam (*verse 20*) contains the addition,*".........and I was not also an adulteress?"* Allāh's reply was, *'in this way Allāh creates what He wills."* It was only due to the fact that the imminent birth was to be contrary to normal occurrences that people were astonished whereas Allāh is Capable of doing as He pleases.

"When He decrees a thing He merely says to it, 'Be!' and it is." The overwhelming power of Allāh created Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام without a father and this is related in His illustrious Qur'ān, yet some people, in conformity with the beliefs of the Jews and Christians, stubbornly claim that his father was Yusuf, carpenter. May Allāh protect us the from them. Āmīn.

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ ﴿48﴾ وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي
قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُم مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنفُخُ
فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿49﴾ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَاةِ وَلِأُحِلَّ لَكُم بَعْضَ الَّذِي

حَرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُم بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿٥٠﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾

(48) "He shall teach them the Book, wisdom, the Torah and the Injīl." (49) "(We will make him) a Prophet to the Bani Isrā'īl (and he shall tell them), 'Indeed I come to you with a sign from your Lord. I can fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, then breath into it and it becomes (a living) bird by the permission of Allāh. I cure him who was born blind and the leper, and I raise the dead with the permission of Allāh. I can inform you of what you eat and what you store at your homes. Surely in this is a sign for you if you are believers." (50) "I confirm that which was before me of the Torah, and I make lawful for you some of that which was forbidden unto you and I come to you with a sign from your Lord. So fear Allāh and obey me." (51) "Verily Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is the straight path."

THE STATUS OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام AND HIS MIRACLES

The first attribute of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام mentioned in this verse is that he shall teach the *"book.* Commentators state that this refers to the other various divine scriptures besides the Torah and the Injīl, which are mentioned separately in this verse.

"...wisdom. .."It is stated in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.166*) that according to Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه, *"wisdom"* refers to the laws of Lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful *(Harām)*. Other commentators state that this refers to all the various aspects of Dīn *(religion)* that Allāh taught Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Another opinion states that it refers to the practices of all the other Prophet عليهم السلام.

".....the Torah and Injīl." The Injīl (*Bible*) was revealed to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام himself and the Torah to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, which contained detailed guidance's for the Bani Isrā'īl. Allāh taught Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام the Torah as well as all its injunctions. All this was included in the glad tidings of the angels and all of this came to pass when Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was granted Prophethood.

THE DETAILS OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ'S عليه السلام MIRACLES

One of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام's miracles was that he was able to mould a bird from clay, then blow onto it whereafter it would fly away as a living creature. Another miracle was that he would place his hand upon the eyes of a person born blind, by virtue of which the person was able to see. Yet another of his miracles was that he would also pass his hands over the bodies of lepers, causing them to be completely cured of their disease.

Allāh would confer upon His messengers عليهم السلام the ability to perform those types of miracles that would render the people of their respective times helpless of emulating, despite their being masters in the same field. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was granted the miracle of the staff at a time when magic was rife. In the same way, during the time of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام the practice of

medicine was rife and there lived many masters of this field. Even they were unable to cure the blind and lepers, so Allāh conferred this miraculous feat to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه relates that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام raised from the dead four people, one of whom was Sām, the son of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. When he raised the dead, some people objected by saying that those whom he raised had died in recent times and it was therefore possible that they were not really dead but merely in a state of suspended animation. For this reason, they asked him to raise such people who had died a very long time ago. It was in response to this that he raised Sām bin Nūh who had died over four thousand years previously. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام then told the people to believe, whereupon some did. The others declared this act as sorcery and demanded to see another miracle. It was then that he told them of the things that they ate and what they stored in their homes. He told them that these supernatural feats are the signs and miracles of Allāh upon which they should believe.

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام also testified to the Torah being the book of Allāh. This he told them because they would not have believed in someone who did not believe in the Torah. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام further told them that he accepted all the injunctions of the Torah and added, *"I make lawful for you some of that which was forbidden unto you."* All this is sufficient for the unbiased person of understanding, *"So fear Allāh and obey me."*

After witnessing these miracles, especially the raising of the dead, it is possible that a person may consider Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام to be Allāh himself. To avoid this misconception, he repeatedly mentioned that these miracles occur *"with the permission of Allāh.* "Even towards the end of Surah Mā'idah, this clause is reiterated four times.

"Verily Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is the straight path." Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام continuously invited the Bani Isrā'īl towards oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* but they only became his enemy. Before him they had already killed Sayyidina Zakariyya and Yahya عليه السلام, as well as many more previously. They also attempted to kill Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام but Allāh saved him and raised him up to the heavens. Many centuries after this, the very people who claim to follow him fabricated the concept of trinity and today they even claim that he is Allāh and the son of Allāh. Some even propagate the belief that his crucifixion was in expiation of all their sins. These people have indeed committed polytheism *(shirk)* with regard to the person who emphatically called himself the servant of Allāh and claimed that Allāh is his Lord.

Lesson: Although Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام made a bird from clay, Scholars *(Ulama)* mention that it was permissible in his Shari'ah but forbidden in the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. In the humble opinion of this servant, permissibility cannot be deduced from this verse because the incident in question was to demonstrate a miracle and the figure of the bird did not remain as it was but transformed into a real bird. The statues and pictures made in these times are not intended for this purpose but are made for display. They are placed on showcases, stuck on vehicles and used to decorate office walls. There is the difference between the earth and skies in comparing the miracle of Sayyidina Isā

عليه السلام and the so-called 'art' of today.

(52) When Isā عليه السلام sensed disbelief from them, he said, "Who shall be my helpers in the cause of Allāh?" The Hawariyyin (disciples) replied, "We shall be Allāh's helpers. We believe in Allāh and you be the witness that indeed we are subservient (to Allāh)." (53) "Our Lord, we believe in what You have revealed and we have followed the messenger, so enrol us among those who have testified (to the truth)."

THE MASS DISBELIEF OF THE BANI ISRĀ'ĪL AND THE SUPPORT OF THE DISCIPLES FOR SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام invoked the Bani Isrā'īl to accept his apostleship and to believe in the Injīl, taking great pains to get the message across to them. However, because of their inherent obstinacy and stubbornness, they refused to accept, despite his repeated efforts. They only grew more obstinate each time and even scoffed and mocked at him. Finally, when he sensed that they were not going to believe, he announced who will assist him. Upon this, a group called the disciples *(Hawariyyin)* stood up to accept the responsibility. Mention is also made of them in the last verse of Surah Saff.

WHO WERE THE HAWARIYYIN *(DISCIPLES)*?

The word *"Hawariyyin"* is derived from the root word 'hūr' which means 'white.' Because of their fair complexions, the damsels of Heaven *(Jannah)* are referred to as the "Hūr" as well. According to certain commentators the disciples of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام were termed disciples *(Hawariyyin)* because they were washermen by occupation and used to be paid for washing the clothes of others.

Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه stated that they were given this name because their clothing was always white, while Sayyidina Qatadah رحمة الله عليه says that it was because their hearts were clean and their character lofty. After recording these opinions, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.176*) writes that they were 12 persons, while another narration places their figure at 29.

They were believers in Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and declared their commitment to assist in the propagation of his Dīn *(religion)*. Although Allāh requires no assistants, it is only because of His grace that He terms the helpers to His Dīn *(religion)* as being His helpers, as He says in Surah Muhammad, *"O you who believe! If you assist Allāh {His Dīn (religion)} He shall assist you and make your feet firm."* [*Surah 47, verse 7*]

The Disciples *(Hawariyyin)* then said, *"We believe in Allāh and you be witness that indeed we are subservient (to Allāh). Our Lord, believe in what You have revealed*

and we have followed messenger, so enrol us among those who have testified (to truthfulness of the prophets)."

The term Disciple *("Hawariy" singular of Hawariyyin)* is also used for someone who is very special, as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Every Prophet had a disciple *(hawariy)*, and mine is Zubair."

The number of Disciples *(Hawariyyin)* with Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام were very few by comparison to the Bani Isrā'īl who continued to falsify him and eventually even plotted to kill him (as shall be explained in the following verses).

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

(54) They planned and Allāh planned, and Allāh is the best of planners. (55) When Allāh said, "Oh Isa, I shall cause you to pass away, raise you unto Me, purify you from those who disbelieve and make those who follow you above those who disbelieve till the Last Day. Then unto Me shall you all return and I shall judge between you concerning those things wherein you differed."

THE FAILED PLOT OF THE JEWS TO MURDER SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام

As the propagation of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام progressed, the enmity of the Jews increased, especially since more people began to follow him. Finally, they resorted to murder him to halt his steadily gaining momentum. Consequently they had him imprisoned in a house and appointed a guard at the door. When the time for execution came, Allāh changed the looks of the guard to resemble that of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. As a result of this, the guard was led to be executed. [*Baghawi as narrated in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.1 p.496*].

Since this person was the only one present when they came to collect Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, they had killed him but the doubt still lingered in their minds concerning the whereabouts of the guard. In this regard Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"They neither killed him, nor did they crucify him but they were cast in doubt. Verily those who differ in this regard are in uncertainty."* [*Surah 4, verse 157*] Further details of this episode shall, Insha Allāh, be discussed in the tafsīr of this verse of Surah Nisā. The plot to martyr Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was thus foiled and one of the Jews themselves was killed. As a result the promise of Allāh proved true when He said, *"Oh Isā, I shall cause you to pass away, raise you unto Me, purify you from those who disbelieve..."*

"They planned and Allāh planned, and Allāh is the best of planners." The Arabic word to denote planning is "makr." This word is generally used in a negative

context for a plot or a scheme, as Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"The consequences of evil schemes only encompass those who devise them"* [*Surah 35, verse 43*]. The word may also be used to denote positive ideas and plans as well. In this verse, when the word is used for Allāh, it refers to His divine plan which is unknown to others.

"Oh Isā, I shall cause you to pass away, raise you unto Me, purify you from those who disbelieve..." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that this verse is linked to the previous and is also a reminder. i.e. "Remember the time when Allāh said, 'Oh Isā..." According to this interpretation, Allāh informed Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام of this after He had intended to foil their plans.

Authentic Ahādīth contain mention of the fact that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام shall return to the world before the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyamah)*. Therefore, Scholars *(Ulama)* mention that the phrase *"I shall cause you to pass away"* has been mentioned first on this occasion so that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام may be consoled that the Jews would not be the ones to put an end to his life. He is assured that Allāh shall cause him to die naturally at a later stage when he returns to the world. On that occasion, he was to be raised to the heavens.

Other commentators maintain that the word "mutawaffiyka" ("I shall cause you to pass away") is derived from the root "tawaffa" which means to lift and remove something completely. This is as Allāh says in a verse of Surah An'ām, 60. *"He is the One Who raises yours souls by night* (gives you sleep), *knows what you do by day and awakens you therein to complete the fixed term."* [*Surah 6, verse 60*]. Upon accepting this interpretation the phrase that follows ("raise you unto Me ") is regarded as an explanatory clause. Once Allāh had rescued him from the vile designs of the Jews, he was removed from their evil environment, as Allāh says, *"I purify you from those who disbelieve."*

Allāh states clearly in Surah Nisā, *"They most certainly did not kill him, but Allāh raised him towards Himself"*. [*Surah 4, verse 32*]

THE DESCENT OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام TO THE WORLD BEFORE JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYAMAH)*

Numerous highly authentic and *"Matawātir"* Ahādīth testify to the fact that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام shall return to the world before the Day of Judgment and be the guide of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, and establish justice and security. [*Ibn Kathīr, v.4, p. 132*]

The Muslims through the centuries have always maintained the belief that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was physically lifted to the heavens, is living there, and shall return to earth close to the Day of Judgment. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went on Ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, he met several Prophet عليه السلام, including Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. However, since the others had already passed away, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was the only one of them who met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while still alive. This is why he is also regarded to be a Sahabi.

THOSE WHO REFUTE THE PRESENT LIFE OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام REFUTE THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh states in Surah Nisā (verse *115*), *"Whosoever opposes the messenger after*

the guidance has become manifest to him and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall allow him to do that which he is doing and then enter him into Hell. It is the worst of abodes."

This verse clearly emphasises the fact that the path adopted by the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* is recognised as a yardstick for the truth. Opposing this shall lead one into Hell. This is so because the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم acquired the Dīn directly from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, then they passed it on to those after them, who, in turn, passed it on to their juniors. In this way, the teachings and beliefs of Islām were transmitted through the ages and anyone contravening these shall be deemed to have strayed.

Those who refute the ascension of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام are prepared to enter Hell rather than accept the belief. When verses such as, *'I shall raise you to Me"* and *"Allāh raised him towards Himself* are presented to them they interpret these to mean simply an elevation in stages. In doing so, they omit to consider the subtle clauses contained in these verses such as *"to me"* and *"towards Himself"* In this way, they render a partial and incomplete interpretation. Whenever the Qur'ān refers to the raising of stages, the words like *'to Me"* or *"towards Himself* are omitted. An example of this is verse 253 in Surah Baqarah which reads, *"... while others He had exalted in status."*

Many ignorant people to this day refuse to accept the true statements of the most truthful the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and rather adhere to the preposterous claims of ignorant persons. May Allāh guide them.

"....purify you from those who disbelieve..." One explanation of this is that Allāh had removed Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام from the evil surroundings of the disbelievers. Another interpretation, also recorded in Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.183*), is that Allāh purified and cleared him from the slander of the Jews about his parentage. Allāh did this via the Qur'ān and the words of His final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"...and make those who follow you above those who disbelieve till the last day." The Christian as well as the Muslims, who attest to the apostleship of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام shall remain dominant over his rejecters (the Jews) till the Day of Judgment. This is with regard to this world. As far as the Hereafter is concerned, only the Belief *(Imān)* recognised by Allāh will guarantee salvation and this includes Belief in the apostleship of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم as well. Because they reject this fundamental belief, the Christians are disqualified from the salvation of the Hereafter. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام also advised his followers to believe in the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم; as is stated in Surah Saff when he told them, *"(and I) bring the glad tidings of a Prophet who shall come after me by the name of Ahmad.* According to the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.183*), all those Christians are included here who lived before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as well as those after him who believed in him.

It may be asked: "Does the dominance of the state of Isrā'īl not indicate dominance of the Jews over others in the region, which is contrary to this verse?" The establishment of a small part of Palestine as a Jewish country would not serve as an objection to this verse since it was given over to them by the Christian

countries of Britain and America. It was the voluntary choice of these people to surrender their dominion to the Jews, which does not imply opposition to this verse. The Jews have no real dominance over those in the region because they are only bolstered by the Western countries. As soon as this support should stop, they will be rendered helpless.

"Then unto Me shall you all return and I shall judge between you concerning those things wherein you differed." The matters regarding which Judgment is to be passed includes the status of Sayyidina Isā علیه السلام whom some term to be Allāh or Allāh's son and whom the Jews do not accept to be even a Prophet. On the Day of Judgment, those who possessed false beliefs shall learn the error of their ways.

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ ذَٰلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ وَٱلذِّكْرِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿٥٨﴾

(56) "As for those who disbelieve, I shall chastise them with a severe chastisement in the world and in the Hereafter, and they shall have no helpers." (57) "As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, they will be given their rewards in full. Allāh does not like the oppressors." (58) These are from the verses and wise reminders that We recite unto you.

THE PROMISE OF CHASTISEMENT FOR THE DISBELIEVERS AND OF REWARDS FOR THE BELIEVERS

In this world, the Muslims and the non-Muslims live and survive equally. However, in the Hereafter it shall only be Belief *(Imān)* that will offer salvation and the outcome shall be as mentioned in the above verse. The disbelievers are punished even in this very world as is witnessed repeatedly. They may be killed, captured or enslaved during Jihād *(religion war)*, or even compelled to pay the atonement *(Jizya)*. Today it can also be seen how their countries are collapsing and how they fall prey to strange new epidemics and disasters.

Wherever their conditions are favourable, it is merely a temporary respite for them, and wherever the Muslims seem to be suffering, it is only an expiation for their sins. The predominance that the Christians enjoy over the Jews should not be misconstrued to mean that they shall be successful in the Hereafter as well since they do not conform to the teachings of Sayyidina Isā علیه السلام. He told them, *"Verily Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him.* " This they do not accept as well as Prophethood of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, regarding which Sayyidina Isā علیه السلام informed them. For this reason, they are also doomed to eternal chastisement.

"These are from the verses and wise reminders that We recite unto you. "These are such things that no person could have knowledge about except by reading the previous scriptures or by learning them from a teacher. Since the Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم had no access to either of these, it is evident that he received this knowledge by divine revelation, which proves his apostleship.

"*.........wise reminders...*" refers to the Qur'ān, which is totally free from any falsehood and replete with words of wisdom.

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ ءَادَمَ خَلَقَهُۥ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ
﴿٥٩﴾ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ فَمَنْ حَآجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَكَ
مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا۟ نَدْعُ أَبْنَآءَنَا وَأَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَنِسَآءَنَا وَنِسَآءَكُمْ وَأَنفُسَنَا وَأَنفُسَكُمْ
ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل لَّعْنَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٦١﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلْقَصَصُ
ٱلْحَقُّ ۚ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

(59) Verily the likeness of Isā عليه السلام with Allāh is as the likeness of Ādam عليه السلام. He created him from clay then said to him, "Be!" and he was. (60) This is the truth from your Lord so be not of those who doubt. (61) Whoever disputes with you concerning this after the knowledge has come to you, then say to them, "Come! We shall summon your sons and our sons, your wives and our wives, yourselves and ourselves. Then we shall collectively supplicate sincerely (to Allāh) to invoke His curse upon the liars." (62) Verily this is certainly a true narrative. There is no deity save Allāh and surely Allāh alone is The Mighty, The Wise. (63) If they turn back, then without doubt Allāh is Aware of those who cause corruption.

THE BIRTH OF SAYYIDINA ISĀ عليه السلام IS SIMILAR TO THE CREATION OF SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام

The Jews in the time of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام as well as many people today find it difficult to believe that he could have been born without a father, thereby casting doubts on the chastity of his mother, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام. Allāh presents a simple answer to their doubts by stating, *"Verily the likeness of Isā عليه السلام with Allāh is as the likeness of Ādam عليه السلام. He created him from clay then said to him, 'Be!' and he was."* Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was created in this way without a father or a mother and even his spouse, Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام was created from him *("He created his spouse from him")*. This was all within the perfect power of Allāh and yet it is indeed surprising that none raised any objections to this, but someone born of a mother causes astonishment!

Allāh Himself instituted the system of young being born of a couple, and it is not farfetched that He is able to create someone without the agency of a father when He could do so without both parents.

"This is the truth from your Lord so be not of those who doubt." Although the

address is to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is actually intended for his Ummah. [*Baghawi in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl," v.1, p.3 10*]

It is reported in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.98*) that a delegation of Christians from Najran arrived in Madinah and enquired from Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as to why he was speaking ill of "their person" [Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام]. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked them what they were referring to, they replied, "You say that he is a servant." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he was indeed a servant of Allāh, His Prophet and His word which He cast into the virgin Maryam عليها السلام. These people became infuriated at this reply and burst out, "How is it possible for anyone to be born without a father? Show us someone who was born without a father?" On this occasion, Allāh revealed the above verse viz. *"Verily the likeness of Isā عليه السلام with Allāh is as the likeness of Ādam عليه السلام..."*

Sayyidina Hasan رضى الله عنه reports that two priests of Najran came to Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He invited them to Islām whereupon they remarked that they were Muslims before him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "The two of you are lying since three factors prevent you from being Muslim. These are worshiping of the cross, consumption of swine and the ascribing of children to Allāh." They asked, "Who is the father of Isā عليه السلام?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never hastened to reply till he received the order from Allāh. Subsequently the above verse was revealed in reply.

THE INVITATION OF MUTUAL IMPRECATION *(MUBĀHALA)* EXTENDED TO THE CHRISTIANS

"Whoever disputes with you concerning this after the knowledge has come to you, then say to them..." Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه (*v.1 p.438*) narrates from Muhammad bin Is'hāq bin Yasār رحمة الله عليه that a delegation of sixty Christians from Najran came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Amongst them were 14 of their noblemen who decided all their affairs and the one was referred to as "Sayyid" (the chief). His name was Ayham and another delegate was their pope called Abu Hārithah who was responsible for their education and teaching.

Their leader was a person called Āqib whom they always consulted in all their affairs and acted on his every command. Abu Hārithah was an Arab of the tribe of Banu Bakr bin Wa'il and was greatly honoured by the Romans who even built a church for him and tended to his every need. He was fully aware of the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the previous scriptures but remained a Christian because of the honour he received as one.

They arrived in Madinah after the Asr Salāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was still in the Mosque *(Masjid)*. They were clothed in very old garments which they covered with beautiful shawls sheets. Since it was the time of their prayers, they offered it in the Masjidun Nabawi, facing towards the east.

Thereafter Abu Hāritha, Āqib and Ayham spoke to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and presented their false beliefs. They said that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh, another that he was the son of Allāh, while the other said that he was one of three (the other two being his mother and Allāh). They also questioned the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as to who the father of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was.

Upon this, Allāh revealed the first eighty verses of Surah Āl Imrān. Because the invitation to mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)* was issued by Allāh in the above verse, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم also extended this to them.

The method of mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)* is clearly stated in the verse itself, *"Come! We shall summon your sons and our sons, your wives and our wives, yourselves and ourselves. Then we shall collectively supplicate sincerely (to Allāh) to invoke His curse upon the liars."* When these people heard this, they excused themselves saying that they wished to be granted some time to contemplate the matter.

The group then conferred with each other. When a person called Abdul Masīh was asked his opinion he said, "You know very well that Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم is the true messenger of Allāh and that whatever he says about Isā عليه السلام is undisputedly true. You are also well aware of the fact that none survived of any nation that challenged a Prophet in mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)*. If you wish to disgrace yourselves, then accept the mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)* and if you wish to remain upon your Dīn *(religion)* and return to your cities, then enter into a truce with him."

After their consultation, they approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم saying, "O Abul Qasim صلى الله عليه و سلم, we have decided to decline the challenge to mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)*. We shall leave you to your Dīn *(religion)* and we shall remain upon ours. We now wish to return to our land so our request to you is to dispatch someone with us who would pass Judgment between our people." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم complied by sending Sayyidina Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضى الله عنه with them.

It is reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1, p.310*) that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم recited the verse *"Come! We shall summon your sons and our sons..."*to them, they requested to be granted respite until the next day. The following morning, they met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم in the Mosque *(Masjid)* while he was sitting with Sayyidina Hussain رضى الله عنه on his lap and Sayyidina Hassan رضى الله عنه on his arm. Sayyidah Fatima رضى الله عنها and Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه were behind him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم was instructing these members of his family to say *'Āmīn'* after each supplication *(du'ā)* of his.

On seeing this sight, their pope told them, "O Christians, I see such faces before me who, if they ask Allāh to move a mountain from its place, He would surely do so. I strongly advise you to avoid the mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)* otherwise you would be destroyed and until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyamah)* there shall be no Christian left upon the surface of the earth."

On hearing this, they approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم and told him of their decision not to engage in mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)*. They told him that they wished to leave him on his Dīn *(religion)* and they be left to theirs.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم told them that since they were not prepared to go ahead with the mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)*, they should accept Islām and that they would then enjoy the privileges of the Muslims and shall only have to fulfill those obligations that are binding upon the Muslims. When they refused this offer, he told them that they would then have to prepare for war. They

admitted that they were unable to fight a war with the Muslims and would rather make a truce.

The truce that was agreed to was that they would annually pay the Muslims with two thousand sets of clothing, a thousand in the month of Safar and the other thousand in the month of Rajab. After agreeing to this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that should they have engaged in the mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)*, the entire population of Najran would have been destroyed. They would all have been transformed into pigs and monkeys, then the entire region would have been consumed by a raging fire, leaving nothing unscathed. He also mentioned that not even the birds would have perched on the trees of the area thereafter. He added that the entire Christian population would have then been wiped out within a year.

It is recorded in a narration of Ahmad in the tafsīr of Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه *(v.1 p.369)* that Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه said, "If these people would have accepted the challenge they would have returned to find none of their wealth nor any of their families alive. (They would also have perished)."

These Christians neither accepted the mutual imprecation *(Mubāhala)* nor Islām despite knowing that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the true messenger of Allāh. Till today they practise this form of behaviour. Scholars *(Ulama)* have defeated them in numerous debates, proving to them that their Bible has been adulterated and that their Dīn *(religion)* was fabricated. However, because of political and other motives, they refuse to accept Islām and continue to spread corruption on the earth.

"If they turn back, then without doubt Allāh is Aware of those who cause corruption." This is addressed to the Christians during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, to those living today and all to come till the Day of Judgment.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ (64)

(64) Say, "O people of the Book, agree to a matter that is alike between us, that we worship none other but Allāh, that we do not ascribe any as partner unto Him and that some of us do not take others as gods besides Allāh." If they turn away then say, "Bear witness that we have surrendered to Allāh."

THE PRESENTATION OF TAUHĪD TO THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

This verse invites the Jews and the Christians to reach an agreement with the Muslims on a point mutually accepted by both parties. The point in question is *"that we worship none other but Allāh, that we do not ascribe any as partner unto Him and that some of us do not take others as gods besides Allāh."*

Although these people have resorted to polytheism *(shirk)*, they are well

aware that the original teachings of their Dīn *(religion)* as well as the pivotal beliefs of Islām are based on the concept of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd).* Allāh enjoins the Muslims to invite these disbelievers *(kuffār)* to a common ground of belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* which is acceptable to both. Instead of persisting to believe false beliefs, they should accept this point of mutual acceptance.

Some people have misinterpreted this verse to mean that the Muslims should collaborate with the Jews and Christians to invite others towards oneness of Allāh while they remain upon their respective Dīn *(religion).* Islām can never tolerate a person who practices disbelief *(kufr).* If a person accepts only oneness of Allāh and refutes the rest of Islām, this shall never be acceptable to Allāh. In this case, despite belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* a person shall never secure salvation in the Hereafter. It is merely the deception of the non-Muslim nations that one accepts oneness of Allāh without accepting the rest of Islām.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wrote to the emperor of Rome, he included the following in his letter, "The peace and blessings of Allāh be upon the one who follows the guidance. I invite you to Islām. Should you accept Islām, you shall remain in peace and Allāh shall grant you a double reward. If you turn away, then you shall earn the sin of all the farmers." This means that he shall, in addition to his personal sin, be burdened with that of all the farmers (i.e. the simple folk) of his country since his refusal would be a means of preventing them from accepting. After this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wrote the above verse. [*Bukhari, v.1, p.5*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم presented the invitation to Islām before the verse, indicating that the object of the verse is to invite towards entire Islām. It does not mean that they should still remain upon their Dīn's *(religion's)* and then assist the Muslims in propagation.

"*........that some of us do not take others as gods besides Allāh.*" It is recorded in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.193*) that Sayyidina Adi bin Hātim رضى الله عنه enquired from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with regard to this phrase saying, "*But we do not worship any besides Allāh?*" Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Do those people (the scholars) not declare certain things Lawful *(Halāl)* and certain things Unlawful *(Harām)* and do you accept this?" When he confirmed this, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "This is the worship of others (since it is the exclusive right of Allāh to declare things Lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful *(Harām).).*" It is evident from this that Sayyidina Adi bin Hatim رضى الله عنه was formerly a Christian.

يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَتِ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ وَٱلْإِنجِيلُ إِلَّا مِنۢ
بَعْدِهِۦٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿65﴾ هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ حَٰجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ
فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿66﴾ مَا كَانَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا
نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَٰكِن كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿67﴾ إِنَّ أَوْلَى ٱلنَّاسِ

بِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَٰذَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿68﴾

(65) O people of the Book, why do you argue with regard to Ibrahīm عليه السلام when the Torah and Injīl were only revealed after him? Do you not understand? (66) Lo! You are the ones who argued concerning those things that you had knowledge about, so why do you now argue regarding that about which you have no knowledge? Allāh knows and you know not. (67) Ibrahīm عليه السلام was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one abiding to the truth and subservient, never from the idolaters. (68) Verily those closest to Ibrahīm عليه السلام are the ones who followed him and this Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as well as those who believe. Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers.

REFUTING THE BELIEF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK THAT SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام WAS A JEW OR A CHRISTIAN

"Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.53*) relates from Bayhaqi a narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Christians of Najran and the Jews were arguing in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The scholars of each group claimed that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام belonged to their faith. On this occasion, Allāh revealed the above verse. The verse admonishes the Jews that they were able to contest with the knowledge they possessed regarding Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, but they now chose to debate an issue about which they had no knowledge.

The claim that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a Jew is totally false since Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was from his very progeny and was born thousands of years after him. How is it possible for him to follow the Dīn *(religion)* of someone who only appeared so long afterwards? Then too these people had added so much polytheism *(shirk)* to the Dīns *(religions)* of Judaism and Christianity whereas Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a pure monotheist. How could he be an adherent of their Dīns *(religion's)* when *"he was one abiding to the truth and subservient, never from the idolaters."*

These claims are all based upon ignorance and a gross lack of knowledge, as Allāh says, *"Do you not understand?"* Thereafter Allāh draws their attention to the fact that *"Allāh knows and you know not."*

WHO HAS A MORE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام?

"Verily those closest to Ibrahīm عليه السلام are the ones who followed him and this Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as well as those who believe." Not only did the Jews and Christians claim a relationship with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, but they claimed that he was a Jew or Christian himself. Allāh refuted this claim by revealing the above verse and informing them who exactly are the ones who can truly claim a relationship with him. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"The way of your father Ibrahīm."* [*Surah 22, verse 78*]

All the Prophet عليه السلام preached the same basic beliefs, but the Shari'ah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم contains many of the laws that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام taught his followers. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام bore tremendous

hardship to propagate his Dīn *(religion)*. He was compelled to leave his homeland, abandon his family and was even thrown into a raging fire. In a similar manner, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah also made great sacrifices for the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to reach humanity. These sacrifices are unparalleled by any other Ummah since the others succumbed to infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*, failing to preserve their Dīns *(religion's)*. How can they then possibly claim to have any relationship with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام?

"Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers." Allāh shall safeguard and assist the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* in both the worlds. The verse does not read 'Allāh is their Protecting Friend' but the word *"the believers"* is specified. This is to elucidate the fact that this honour is due only to the quality of Belief *(Imān)*.

وَدَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لَوْ يُضِلُّونَكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿69﴾ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿70﴾ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ بِٱلْبَـٰطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿71﴾

(69) A group of the people of the Book yearn to lead you astray. They only lead themselves astray but they perceive it not. (70) O people of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allāh whereas you testify to them? (71) Oh people of the Book, why do you confuse the truth with falsehood and conceal the truth knowingly?

THE DESIRE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK TO LEAD THE MUSLIMS ASTRAY

The opening verse informs the Muslims that a group of these disbelievers are never content to see you upon your Dīn *(religion)*, but will make every effort to mislead you to enter into their Dīn *(religion)*. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah (*verse 109*), *'Many of the people of the Book wish that they could return you to be disbelievers after you have believed. This is due to jealousy from within after the truth has become apparent to them."* In the same strain, Allāh says in Surah Mumtahinah, *"They wish that you disbelieve."* [*Surah 60, verse 2*]

From the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the infidels *(kuffār))* always had this desire and kept devising schemes to realise this, but this only served to increase their infidelity *(kufr)*. Nowadays also, they do not cease in their efforts to concert with the Muslims and they still do not perceive that it is only enhancing the dark veil upon their hearts.

*"O people of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allāh whereas you testify to them ?"*In spite of knowing that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the final messenger of Allāh and witnessing the various signs in support of this, they refused to accept. Such behaviour shall only be a cause of severe punishment for them.

"O people of the Book, why do you confuse the truth with falsehood..." Sayyidina

Hasan رضى الله عنه says that this refers to their adulteration of the Torah and the Injīl. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه mentions that it refers to their verbal claims to Belief *(Imān)*, while infidelity *(kufr)* still lurked in their hearts, making them hypocrites.

"...and conceal the truth knowingly?" They were fully aware of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but did not reveal this knowledge. The Jews used to admit to each other, and sometimes even to the Muslims that they recognise the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but worldly motives would not permit them to accept Islām.

وَقَالَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَجْهَ ٱلنَّهَارِ
وَٱكْفُرُوٓا۟ ءَاخِرَهُۥ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِمَن تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْهُدَىٰ
هُدَى ٱللَّهِ أَن يُؤْتَىٰٓ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَآ أُوتِيتُمْ أَوْ يُحَآجُّوكُمْ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ
ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو
ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٤﴾

(72) A group from the People of the Book say, "Believe in that which has been revealed to the believers at the beginning of the day and disbelieve therein at the close of the day, in order that they return." (73) "Do not admit this except before one who follows your creed." Tell them, "Verily the true guidance is the guidance of Allāh, and (you only say these things) because others have been given what you were given or because they overcome you in a dispute by your Lord. "Say, "Definitely bounty is in the hand of Allāh. He accords it to whoever He pleases, and Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing." (74) "He selects for His mercy whom He pleases, and Allāh is the Great Bestower of bounty."

A SCHEME OF THE JEWS

The first verse makes mention of a scheme of a group among the Jews who would tell one another to go to the Muslims during the beginning of the day and express their acceptance of Islām. They would spend the day in this way and when the evening came, they would again revert to Judaism. This pretence was merely to turn the Muslims away from their Dīn *(religion)*.

It is mentioned in "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3, p.199*) that 12 scholars from the Jews of Khayber decided that they would pretend to accept Islām and make the declaration in the morning to the Muslims. Then, when evening came, they would declare to the Muslims that they had pondered over their scriptures and consulted their scholars and had decided that the Dīn *(religion)* of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is false and that they should rather revert to their former Dīn *(religion)*. In this way, the Muslims who considered these Jews to be learned would become dissuaded from Islām and turn away from it. With the grace of Allāh, their scheme did not influence any of the Muslims.

"Do not admit this except before one who follows your creed." They told each other to remain steadfast on their Dīn *(religion)* and tell the Muslims that they are Muslims as well. Their true beliefs should only be expressed before their own people.

Other commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that they told each other not to bring faith in anyone except one who conforms to their Dīn *(religion)*. Therefore, since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought a new Shari'ah that did not conform to theirs, he must not be followed. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

"Tell them, 'Verily the true guidance is the guidance of Allāh..." Whoever Allāh decides to guide shall be guided despite the schemes of others to lead him astray. According to the second interpretation of the former verse mentioned in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl", this verse shall be interpreted to mean that Allāh changes the various Shari'ahs of Prophet as He pleases. Since He sent the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with another Shari'ah, it should be followed and whoever does not follow it is indeed in manifest error and infidelity *(kufr)*.

"......and (you only say these things) because others have been given what you were given or because they overcome you in a dispute by your Lord." This refers to another scheme of theirs. They decided that they would not admit to anyone that another person [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] had received any revelation and knowledge like their scriptures and knowledge. They desired that only they be accorded such things so that the others may not have any proof of evidence against them on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that this verse addresses the Jews, telling them that they devise various schemes and plots against the Muslims merely because of their jealousy for the Muslims. They are jealous that the Muslims have received a divine scripture and have stronger religious arguments than theirs.

"Say, 'Definitely bounty is in the hand of Allāh. He accords it to whoever He pleases, and Allāh is All Embracing, All Knowing. He selects for His mercy whom He pleases, and Allāh is the Great Bestower of bounty." The malice and enmity that the Jews bore for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because of his apostleship and honour of receiving the Qur'ān is based on ignorance and infidelity *(kufr)*. All these bounties are from Allāh and such behaviour constitutes an objection to Allāh. They were envious that another nation had received what they had received in the past. This type of behaviour always serves to destroy learned scholars and many others.

Allāh makes mention of this in verse 90 of Surah Baqarah as well where He says, *"...jealous of the fact that Allāh confers His grace upon whoever of His bondmen He chooses. So they earned wrath upon wrath."* Their malice makes them resort to infidelity *(kufr)*, thereby preparing themselves for the eternal punishment of the Hereafter. They are prepared to do this rather than seek to please Allāh who may shower His munificence upon them and whoever He wills from His servants.

۞ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ مَنْ إِن تَأْمَنْهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِۦٓ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ إِن تَأْمَنْهُ

بِدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهِۦٓ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَآئِمًا ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا۟ لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِى
ٱلْأُمِّيِّـۧنَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿75﴾ بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ
بِعَهْدِهِۦ وَٱتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿76﴾

(75) From the People of the Book there is him who, if you trust him with a wealth of treasures, he will return it to you. Then there is him who, if you trust him with a single dinār, he will not return it to you unless you keep standing over him. This is because they say, "We have no obligation towards the unlettered people." They lie against Allāh knowingly. (76) Yes, he who fulfills his pledge and possesses taqwa, then surely Allāh loves the pious.

THE TRUSTWORTHINESS AND THE DISHONESTY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

This verse mentions those of the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)* who became Muslims and those who did not. Those depicted as trustworthy in the verse *("he will return it to you ")* are those former Jews or Christians who accepted Islām such as Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه and others. The dishonest among them *("he will not return it to you ")* are those who opted to remain upon their infidelity *(kufr)* because of their love for the world and their engrossment therein, such as Ka'ab bin Ashraf. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"]*

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that a person placed 12 thousand Awqiya of gold (one Awqiya is equal in weight to 40 Dirhams) in trust with Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām, which the latter returned promptly. On the other hand, a person of the Quraish placed one Dinār in the trust of a Jew called Fanhas bin Āzwa, who never returned it. The verse refers to situations such as these, where the difference in the trustworthiness of the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)* could be clearly distinguished.

Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes that it is deduced from this verse *("unless you keep standing over him")* that it is permissible for a creditor to persistently ask for his dues to be paid to him.

Although this verse is addressed to the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)*, it also serves to drive the point home to those Muslims who are quick to accept loans and trusts but procrastinate when the time comes to repay. They cause great grief and difficulty to their creditors since they have no intention to ever settle the debt. Scholar *(Imām)* Bukhari رحمة الله عليه narrates a hadith from Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says, "Whoever takes a loan from others with the intention to repay, then Allāh shall repay it for him (i.e. Allāh shall create the means to make repayment easy). However, the person who takes the wealth of others with the intention of destroying the right (i.e. does not want to repay), then Allāh shall destroy this wealth (it will then be useless to him, but shall not absolve him of repayment and he will have to face severe punishment in the Hereafter)."

THE LIE OF THE JEWS THAT IT IS PERMISSIBLE FOR THEM TO USURP THE RIGHTS OF THE UNLETTERED FOLK

The Jews believed that they had a right to usurp the wealth of the Arabs and of any other nation who did not conform to their Dīn *(religion)*. Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه relates that during the period of ignorance, the Arabs used to trade with the Jews. When they accepted Islām, they demanded their dues, but the Jews flatly refused to repay saying that they had no obligation towards them since they had abandoned their Dīn *(religion)*. They considered this change of Dīn *(religion)* to be an annulment of their dealings, and also added that this law was stipulated in their divine scriptures.

The Arabs are referred to as "unlettered people" because they were not as literate and learned as the Jews were. The Jews lied when they said that Allāh had declared the wealth of non-Jews to be permissible for them. For this reason Allāh declares, *"They lie against Allāh knowingly." ["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl," v.1, p.31718]*

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه that when the verse *"they lie against Allāh knowingly"* was revealed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The enemies of Allāh lie!"

Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه *(v.1 p.374)* also reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that a person who was going out in Jihād *(religion war)* told him, "When we go out in Jihād *(religion war)*, we eat whatever chickens or goats that we find belonging to the Dhimmies {Infidels *(kuffār)* living in a Muslim country}." Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه asked him on what grounds he did so, to which he replied, "We do not see any harm in doing so." Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه told him, "You speak just as the Jews did when they said, *"We have no obligation towards the unlettered people."* When the Dhimmies have paid the atonement *(Jizya)*, their wealth is not lawful for you. Yes, if they give it of their own accord, then this is another matter."

THE PRACTICE OF CERTAIN FALSE SAINTS

There are many false "saints" in today's times who, on their annual visits to some towns, take whatever they please from the residents who have been their followers for numerous years. These people cannot refuse to give because of etiquette and respect, although they are also not too pleased with the practice. This practice is Unlawful *(Harām)* since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Be warned that the wealth of a Muslim is not lawful unless acquired with the pleasure of his heart." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 255*]

Although a person may give verbal consent or remain silent, his wealth still cannot be deemed permissible if this consent is obtained under duress or through some pressing need of etiquette. Only when he is absolutely happy to part with his wealth will it be permissible to take it. It should also be understood that when a gift is given to a person on the presumption that he is pious or righteous, it will not be permissible for him to accept such a gift if he is a Fāsiq *(sinner)* and spiritually unclean.

"Yes, he who fulfills his pledge and possesses taqwa, then surely Allāh loves the pious." The first word of this verse (*"Yes"*) is a reply to the notion of the Jews that

the wealth of others is permissible for them to usurp as they please. They felt that they shall not be answerable for this action, but Allāh reminds them that they will indeed be required to account for this misdeed of theirs. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni," v.3, p. 2 03*]

Despite carrying out such evil actions as described above, the Jews still regarded themselves as the beloved and chosen race of Allāh. The verse brings to their attention the fact that those who are indeed beloved to Allāh are those who fulfill their pledge with Allāh (which includes belief in the final Prophet) and abstain from sins such as infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* (which are the greatest of sins), as well as usurping the wealth of others. Such people fulfill both the rights of man and those of Allāh. As a result they become the beloved of Allāh since He loves those possessing piety *(Taqwa)*.

This verse highlights the importance of fulfilling agreements and pledges, be they with Allāh or with other men. The People of the Book had the covenant with Allāh that they would believe in the final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the covenant that every Muslim has with Allāh is that one shall fulfill every commandment of His.

Sayyidina Sufyan bin Abdullah Thaqafi رضى الله عنه once asked Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to inform him of the most concise aspect of Islām so that he need not ask another person anything else thereafter. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Say, 'Āmantu billahi' (*I believe in Allāh*), then remain steadfast." [*"Mishkātul Masābih," p. 12, from Muslim*]

Recitation of the Kalimah is not merely a verbal utterance but entails much more. It is also an acknowledgement and pledge that one is prepared to accept and practise every injunction and commandment of Allāh promulgated in the Qur'ān and by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Every Muslim has undertaken to fulfill every duty imposed on him by Islām.

Every pledge taken with another human should be fulfilled if it does not entail any sin. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"Fulfill pledges for verily questioning shall take place with regard to pledges"* [*Surah 17, verse 34*]. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that there are three traits which, if they are found in a person, will mean that he is a real hypocrite. If any one of them is found in him it will mean that he has a trait of hypocrisy in him, unless he discards it. These are (1) When a trust is kept with him, he misappropriates it. (2) When speaking, he lies. (3) When taking a pledge, he does not fulfill it. (4) When disputing, he swears." [*Bukhari*]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَيْمَٰنِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَا خَلَٰقَ لَهُمْ فِي ٱلْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

(77) Those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allāh 's covenant and their oaths, such people have no portion in the Hereafter. Allāh will neither speak to

them nor look at them on the Day of Judgment, and will not purify them. Theirs shall be a painful chastisement.

A WARNING TO THOSE WHO SELL THE COVENANT OF ALLĀH

The covenant that the Jews made with Allāh to believe in the final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was concealed from the Jewish masses by their scholars. They also altered the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Torah and told the people that Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم did not fit the description of the Torah. In this way, they maintained their sway over the people and continued to accept bribes from them. Thus they bartered the covenant of Allāh for the measly gains of this world. Sayyidina Ikramah رضى الله عنه reports that this verse was revealed with regard to certain leaders of the Jews like Abu Rafi, Kinana, Huyay and others. They used to conceal the true description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Torah and write other false descriptions themselves. They would even swear on oath that these are the true revelations from Allāh. This they did to maintain the bribes and lavish lifestyles that they were accustomed to.

THE EVIL CONSEQUENCES OF FALSE OATHS

Many people are in the habit of taking false oaths. Therefore, the verse is not specifically directed at any party but addresses all those who practise this vile action. They will have no share in the Hereafter, nor shall Allāh speak or look at them kindly. Their lot shall be only a most painful punishment. The verse signifies Allāh's wrath on these people.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.204*) writes that such people are not worthy of being judged by Allāh, but shall be addressed and tried by the angels. Commenting on the phrase *"will not purify them"*, Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه states that Allāh shall not praise them, nor regard them favourably and will not pardon their sins. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.1 p.3 19*] Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه says that Allāh will not purify them of their sins, but will order them to enter the fire. [*v.1 p.375*] This means that they will not be pardoned of their sins, neither shall they be allowed to cleanse themselves by briefly going to Hell and then entering Heaven *(Jannah)*.

Bukhari (*v.1 p.366*) narrates from Sayyidina Ash'ath bin Qais رضى الله عنه that he was involved in a dispute with a Jew concerning a piece of land which the Jew denied him. He took the case before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who asked him if he had any witnesses in his favour. When he replied in the negative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Jew to swear on oath that it was his land. On hearing this, Sayyidina Ash'ath رضى الله عنه mentioned that the Jew would take a false oath and acquire the land. Upon this the above verse was revealed viz. *"Those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allāh 's covenant and their oaths, such people have no portion in the Hereafter. Allāh will neither speak to them, nor look at them on the Day of Judgment, and will not purify them. Theirs shall be a painful chastisement."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever takes a false oath to acquire the wealth of another, shall meet Allāh in such a condition that Allāh shall be angry with him. Allāh Himself

attests to this fact." Hereupon Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه recited the above verse. The narrator of this hadith, Sayyidina Abu Wā'il رحمة الله عليه [*a student of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd* رضى الله عنه] says that he met Sayyidina Ash'ath رضى الله عنه later that day. The latter asked him what Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه had told them, to which he related the above hadith. together with the verse. To this Sayyidina Ash'ath رضى الله عنه stated that the verse was revealed with regard to himself. [*Bukhari v.1 p.368*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abi Awfa رضى الله عنه narrates that this verse was revealed with reference to a trader who announced on oath that he had purchased his goods for a certain inflated amount, which was misleading to the customers. This is commonly practised by traders to earn themselves a higher profit. [*Bukhari v.1 p.367*]

Numerous Ahādīth have been cited above as reasons for the revelation of the verse under discussion. It is not farfetched to assume that all these incidents are in fact related to the verse, since they all pertain to the selling of Allāh's covenant and taking false oaths for the petty gains of this world.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that there are three people whom Allāh will not look at on the Day of Judgment and they shall receive a most excruciating punishment. He remarked, "Terrible is their condition and they are indeed wretched. Who are they "O Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم?" The reply was, "They are those whose clothes hang below their ankles, those who remind of their generosity, and those who sell their wares by taking false oaths." [*Muslim*] Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Oaths sell merchandise and destroy blessings." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p. 243 from Bukhari and Muslim*]

Many people institute court cases for false claims. They claim what is not theirs and even present false witnesses to substantiate their claims. At times even the defendant takes false oaths. All this is done in total disregard of the warnings sounded in the Qur'ān and Ahādīth. Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who claims something that is not his is not from us and should prepare his abode in Hell."[*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Unais رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The major sins are polytheism *(shirk)*, disobedience to parents and taking false oaths. The person who took an oath to substantiate his claim and included therein a lie equivalent to a wing of a mosquito, then this oath shall remain as a black spot for him up to the Day of Judgment." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p. 328 from Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrated that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh has made Hell incumbent upon a person who usurped the right of a Muslim with a false oath and has forbidden Heaven *(Jannah)* for him)' Someone enquired, "Even if it be an insignificant thing, O Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم?" He replied, "Even if it be a branch of an aloe tree!" [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p.327 from Muslim*]

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُۥنَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

(78) Indeed from them there is a party who distort their tongues in expressing the Book so that you may regard it as part of the Book when it is really not part of the Book. They say that it is from Allāh when it is not from Allāh, and they knowingly lie about Allāh.

SOME OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK ADULTERATE THE BOOK OF ALLĀH, SAYING THAT IT IS FROM ALLĀH

This verse also refers to the Jews who used to distort the pronunciation of words when reciting the Torah so that those listening to them would hear something that was not actually written in it. In this way they changed the description of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and also concealed the verses of stoning married people who commit adultery.

The manner in which they presented these verses would beguile others to think that these were from Allāh. At times they would even tell the people that these verses were from Allāh. An example of the way in which a person can distort pronunciation to fool others is when someone is asked to swear by the Kā'ba. Instead of saying that he swears by the Kā'ba, he says, "By the Kā'bak!" None would detect the alteration in the sentence and others may wonder how he took an oath, knowing that his word was false. To this he may casually reply that he did not swear by the Kā'ba but rather by the Kā'bak, which bears no significance. ("Kā'bak" may only be translated, in certain languages, as a cage for keeping pigeons.)

The above explanation is just by way of example since it is not permissible to take an oath by the Kā'ba. Hāfidh Baghawi رحمة الله عليه and Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه mention that the purport of the verse *"distort their tongues"* is that the Jews used to interpret the Torah in a way that was appealing to them, changing its true meaning, and then telling others that this was the way in which Allāh had revealed it.

In this manner, they would alter the verses of their scriptures and attribute lies to Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Destruction be for those who write the Book with their own hands and then say, 'This is from Allāh.' (This they do) to sell it for a measly price. Woe be to them for what their hands write and woe be to them for what they earn."* [*Surah 2, verse 79*]

These people could manipulate the situation in this manner because it was only a few people who had any knowledge of the scriptures, and the masses were ignorant. Therefore, the people accepted whatever they were told.

Even amongst the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم there are those who interpret the Qur'ān according to their whims and fancies. There was a person who translated the verse, *"Say (Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), 'I am only a*

human like yourselves," to mean that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is not a human. This he did by translating the Arabic word *"innama"* to mean 'not' whereas it means 'only.' This is the unfortunate method of those who follow their passions. They feel that they cannot displease the masses even if it means resorting to disbelief *(kufr)*.

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُؤْتِيَهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحُكْمَ وَٱلنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا۟ عِبَادًا لِّى مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَٰكِن كُونُوا۟ رَبَّٰنِيِّـۧنَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَلَا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَن تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ أَرْبَابًا ۗ أَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

(79) It is not possible that Allāh gives any human a book wisdom and Prophethood, and then he tells the people, "Leave Allāh and worship me." He would rather say, "Become the people of Allāh by virtue of your teaching of the Book and your studying thereof" (80) They do not instruct you to take the angels and Prophet as deities. Would he instruct you to disbelieve after you had become Muslims?

EVERY PROPHET INSTRUCTED PEOPLE TO BE THE FAITHFUL SERVANTS OF ALLĀH

"Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.54*) records that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم collectively invited the Jews of Madinah and the Christians of Najran to Islām, Abu Rafi (*a Jew of the Banu Quraizah tribe*) commented, "O Muhammad, you want us to worship you just as these Christians worship Isā!" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exclaimed, "Mu'adh Allāh! *(I seek Allāh's protection!)* Why should I desire this?" On this occasion Allāh revealed the above verse.

According to Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه, a person told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "We greet you just as we greet others. (*To show respect to your elevated status*) Should we rather not prostrate to you instead?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No, do not do so. Honour your Prophet and grant each his due rights, for prostration is only for Allāh." Upon this request, the above verse was revealed. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.3 p.207*]

The verse applies equally to both the above incidents, saying that *"It is not possible that Allāh gives any human a Book, wisdom and Prophethood, and then he tells the people, 'Leave Allāh and worship me."* The mission of Prophet عليه السلام was simply to invite towards Allāh. "He would rather say, 'Become the people of Allāh..." This verse refutes the belief of the Christians who claim that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام advocated that people worship him and his mother.

"........by virtue of your teaching of the Book and your studying thereof" Explaining this verse, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.208*) says that the very teaching and study of the divine scriptures dictate that one should become a truly devoted servant of Allāh. Knowledge without practice is futile, as is

practice without knowledge.

"........*the people of Allāh*" The Arabic word "*Rabbāniyyin*" in this context is related to the word Lord. Various explanations of this word have been rendered by the commentators and the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.320*) reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Hasan رضى الله عنه that it means learned scholars {*fuqaha and Scholars (Ulama)*}. Sayyidina Qatadah رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to wise men of learning, while Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it means such men of learning who practise their knowledge.

Another verdict of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه is that it means such people who are extremely learned and teach others as well. According to another report, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه says that these men nurture their knowledge with practice. In "Durrul Manthūr", Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه is reported to have said that these are people who are wise and Allāh fearing. Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه says that they are those who are perfect in knowledge and action.

In brief, after taking all the above into consideration, the '*Rabbāniyyin*' are those who are learned, wise, pious, practical and who are able to guide others. Then, of course, the most important requisite is Belief *(Imān)*, without which none can be successful in the Hereafter and can never be amongst this noble group of people. Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه simply translates the word as "*the people of Allāh.*" This concise translation includes all of the above and included much more by way of sterling morals and noble character.

It is the responsibility of such people also to propagate what they know. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, "*Why do their 'Rabbāniyyun' and scholars not prohibit them from their sinful speech and consumption of the unlawful? Evil indeed is what they carry out.*" [*Surah 5, verse 63*]

"*They do not instruct you to take the angels and Prophet as deities.*" All Prophet عليه السلام preached oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and would never have told the people to worship any besides Allāh.

"*Would he instruct you to disbelieve after you had become Muslims?*" It is an impossibility that a Prophet عليه السلام could preach polytheism *(shirk)* to anyone. They preached only the acceptance of their apostleship, which they have been instructed to do and without which no person can be a true believer, nor attain salvation.

The sole role of all the Prophet عليه السلام, including the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, was that people worship only Allāh and be slave unto Him alone. Thereafter the Companions *(Sahābah)* رضى الله عنهم also made efforts to achieve the same goal. Once, during the Jihād *(religion war)* against the Persians, Sayyidina Rib'ī bin Āmir رضى الله عنه came as messenger before the Persian chief Rustam. Rustam asked him, "Why have you people come?" The Sahabi رضى الله عنه replied, "Allāh has sent us to free man from the slavery of man and lead him to the worship of Allāh, and from the oppression of current Dīns *(religions)* to the justice of Islām." [*Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه in his book "Al Bidaya wan Nihāya"*]

In our present times there are many false saints who know nothing of mysticism and the Shari'ah. They mislead their followers and even make them

prostrate before them and before their graves. All this is done with worldly motives. Mysticism is also subservient to the Shari'ah, and all the various practices such as swearing allegiance, etc, are with the motive of bringing people into Allāh's worship and subservience.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ لَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُكُم مِّن كِتَٰبٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَآءَكُمْ
رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِۦ وَلَتَنصُرُنَّهُۥ ۚ قَالَ ءَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ
إِصْرِى ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَقْرَرْنَا ۚ قَالَ فَٱشْهَدُوا۟ وَأَنَا۠ مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ فَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ
ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(81) When Allāh took the covenant with Prophet (saying) "Whatever I give you of the scripture and wisdom, then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you must believe in him and you must assist him." Allāh said, "Do you agree and accept My covenant?" They replied, "We agree!" He said, "Then bear witness and I will be a Witness with you." (82) So whoever will turn back after this, then those are the disobedient ones.

THE COVENANT TAKEN FROM THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام

The above verse mentions the pledge that Allāh took from all the Prophet عليهم السلام. They were required to believe in and assist any new Prophet that appeared during their lifetimes and also to make their followers do the same. If no other Prophet came during their lifetime, they were to encourage their followers to believe in Prophet to come after him. In this way Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was enjoined to believe in Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام in Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم

According to other commentators, the word *"messenger"* denotes a specific messenger. In this case it would mean that all the Prophet عليه السلام were instructed to believe in and assist Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم if he had to come in their lifetime. They were also required to preach his coming to their followers and to invoke them to follow him should they find themselves in his era. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.1 p.322*]

Allāh then asked the Prophet عليه السلام, *"Do you agree and accept My covenant?"* This was said to emphasise the covenant, whereupon all replied in one voice, *"We agree!"* Thereafter, Allāh told them, *"Then bear witness and I will be a Witness with you."*

This covenant was taken by all the Prophet عليه السلام, for themselves and on behalf of all of their Ummahs. With regard to those who did not abide by its conditions Allāh says, *"So whoever will turn back after this, then those are the disobedient ones."* In rejecting a single Prophet, a person is actually rejecting the commandment of Allāh. For this reason he is declared a disobedient *(fāsiq)* and, therefore, a disbeliever *(kāfir)* of the worst caliber. No Prophet could sin and all abided by the condition of this covenant. It was their followers who did not

comply. The Jews rejected Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and they, together with the Christians, rejected the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE SEAL OF ALL PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Sheikh Abul Hasan Taqi-ud-Dīn As Subki رحمة الله عليه writes in his treatise on this verse (which appears on (*p. 38*) of the first volume of his Fatāwa) that the "*messenger*" referred to in the above verse is none other than Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh had not taken a covenant from all the Prophet عليه السلام with regard to any other Prophet but him.

The status and honour accorded to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this verse is evident. It is learnt from this verse that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to appear during the period of any Prophet, his Prophethood will prevail over the all of creation from the time of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. The statement of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that "I have been sent unto the whole of mankind" is not merely confined to those in his period up to the Day of Judgment, but also includes those before him. This clarifies the hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I was a Prophet while Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was still suspended between body and soul." *["Mishkātul Masābih" p. 513 from Tirmidhi]*

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ ٱللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُۥٓ أَسْلَمَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا
وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ قُلْ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَٱلنَّبِيُّونَ
مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ
دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

(83) Do they seek a Dīn (religion) besides the Dīn of Allāh when unto Him submit all within the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him shall they all be returned. (84) Say, "We believe in Allāh, in that which was revealed unto us, what was revealed unto Ibrahīm, Ismā'īl, Is'hāq, Ya'qūb, their children, and that which was revealed unto Mūsa, Isa and all Prophet from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and unto Him we have submitted." (85) Whosoever seeks a Dīn (religion) besides Islām, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be, in the Hereafter, among the losers.

ONLY THE DĪN *(RELIGION)* OF ISLĀM IS ACCEPTABLE BY ALLĀH

Allāh has chosen the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām for His creation, as He says in another part of Surah Āl Imrān (*verse 19*), *"Definitely the only Dīn (religion) with Allāh is Islām."* Allāh also states in Surah Mā'idah, *"Today I have perfected for you your Dīn (religion), completed My favour on you and chosen Islām as your Dīn*

(religion)" [*Surah 5, verse 3*]. Allāh has named His chosen Dīn *(religion)* 'Islām' which means 'to submit' or 'to surrender.' All the creation of Allāh submit to Him and the Dīn *(religion)* of all the Prophets عليهم السلام was Islām i.e. they all preached submission and obedience to Allāh.

When Sayyidina Ibrahīm and his son Sayyidina Ismā'īl عليهما السلام constructed the Kā'ba, they prayed to Allāh thus, *"Our Lord, make us both submissive to You and create a submissive (Muslim) nation from our progeny"* [*Surah Baqarah, verse 128*]. Allāh accepted this prayer of theirs and created the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم from their progeny, who are followers of Islām.

It is the duty of every servant of Allāh that he submits and surrenders totally to his Creator and Master, both outwardly and inwardly. This is the practice of all the angels and other creation of Allāh in the heavens and on earth. Islām is the Dīn *(religion)* for the human being as well as for the Jinn, but since they are to be tested in the world, they have been given the choice of acceptance. Allāh says in Surah Mulk, *"He created death and life to test who of you carry out the best of deeds"* [*Surah 67, verse 2*]. They are, however, still governed by the system and decrees of Allāh as far as their lives and deaths are concerned. They have been shown the rewards and retribution of Belief *(Imān)* and disbelief *(kufr)*, and in this way, they are allowed to prepare accordingly for either Heaven *(Jannah)* or Hell.

Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"Declare the truth from your Lord, so whoever wills should believe and whoever wills should disbelieve. Indeed for the oppressive ones, We have prepared the fire"* [*Surah 18, verse 29*]. All the Prophets عليهم السلام were Muslim and preached the submission only to Allāh. For this reason the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم is instructed to declare his belief in all that was revealed to all of them, saying, *"We believe in Allāh, in that which was revealed unto us, what was revealed unto Ibrahīm, Ismā'īl, Is'hāq, Ya'qūb, their children, and that which was revealed unto Mūsa, Isa and all Prophet from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and unto Him we have submitted."*

Since all the Prophets عليهم السلام belonged to the same Dīn *(religion)*, we believe in all of them, as well as all that was revealed unto them since all of this was from Allāh. Although the word *"all Prophets"* is used, certain Prophets عليهم السلام have received specific mention because the Jews and the Christians also recognised these Prophets عليهم السلام.

"...willingly or unwillingly..." Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه (*v.1 p.379*) writes that those submitting willingly in the heavens are the angels, and upon the earth they are those who were born as Muslim. Those who submit unwillingly are those disbelievers *(kuffār)* who were taken captive [in Jihād *(religion war)*] in chains and shackles, then accepted Islām, to be lead into Heaven *(Jannah)*, seemingly by force.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that those submitting unwillingly are the ones who became Muslim after Jihād *(religion war)* or some other similar cause. According to others, the people referred to are those who were themselves unhappy to become Muslim. The Sufiya (*saints*) mention that those who submit willingly are the people who accept the commandments of Allāh without any doubts and hesitation in their hearts. Those who harbour these feelings in their

hearts and find evil whispers becoming an obstacle, are termed to be unwillingly submissive.

Another opinion is that the willing ones are the angels in the heavens and those pious servants of Allāh upon the earth who are His chosen ones. The others (i.e. the unwilling) are those whom doubts continue to plague. The disbelievers are included in the second group for, although they accept the existence of Allāh, the inherent darkness within them spur them on to commit polytheism *(shirk)*.

According to "Rūhul Ma'āni", this is the opinion of Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه as well. This explanation is not entirely satisfactory since there are many who completely deny Allāh and His power of creation. If one views the broad context of the word *"all within"*, then the explanation of Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه will also be unsatisfactory since it restricts the meaning somewhat. It is for this reason that this humble servant has rendered the explanation given above i.e. all are subservient to the decree and will of Allāh. Since this is an irreconcilable fact, it is only natural then that every person accepts the Dīn *(religion)*prescribed by Allāh. Allāh knows best.

"Whosoever seeks a Dīn (religion) besides Islām, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be, in the Hereafter, among the losers." Islām is the Dīn *(religion)* that Allāh sent through all his Prophet عليه السلام, up to the time of the final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah (*verse 3*), *"Today I have perfected for you your Dīn (religion), completed My favour on you and chosen Islām as your Dīn (religion)."* Irrespective of a person's exertion in worship, nothing shall be accepted from him unless he conforms to the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām. More details in this regard have been given in verse 62 of Surah Baqarah where Allāh says, *"Verily those who believe, the Jews, the Christians and the Sabi....."*. One may also refer to the commentary of verse 19 of Surah Āl Imrān where Allāh says, *"Definitely the only Dīn (religion) with Allāh is Islām."*

كَيْفَ يَهْدِي ٱللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا۟ بَعْدَ إِيمَـٰنِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱلرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ وَجَآءَهُمُ
ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ (86) أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ أَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةَ
ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ (87) خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا
هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ (88) إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
(89) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بَعْدَ إِيمَـٰنِهِمْ ثُمَّ ٱزْدَادُوا۟ كُفْرًا لَّن تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلضَّآلُّونَ (90) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَمَاتُوا۟ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِم مِّلْءُ
ٱلْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوِ ٱفْتَدَىٰ بِهِۦٓ ۗ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّـٰصِرِينَ (91)

(86) How shall Allāh guide a people who disbelieved after believing, (after) they testified that the messenger is certainly true and (after) clear proofs had come to them? Allāh does not guide the oppressive folk. (87) These are the ones whose

retribution shall be that upon them will be the curse of Allāh, the angels and mankind at large. (88) They shall abide therein forever. The punishment shall not be lessened for them, neither shall they be granted respite. (89) Except for those who repent afterwards and make amends. Surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (90) Verily those who disbelieve after believing, then increase in their disbelief, their repentance shall never be accepted. These are indeed the ones gone astray. (91) Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, the earth full of gold shall never be accepted from any of them if they ever wish to offer it as ransom. Theirs shall be a painful punishment and they shall have no helpers.

THE CHASTISEMENT FOR APOSTATES AND DISBELIEVERS

"Durrul Manthūr" reports that a person called Hārith bin Suwaid accepted Islām and then returned to his people as a infidel *(kāfir)*. It was on this occasion that the above verse was revealed, *"How shall Allāh guide a people who disbelieved after believing, (after) they testified that the messenger is certainly true and (after) clear proofs had come to them. Allāh does not guide the oppressive folk. These are the ones whose retribution shall be that upon them will be the curse of Allāh, the angels and mankind at large. They shall abide therein forever. The punishment shall not be lessened for them, neither shall they be granted respite. Except for those who repent afterwards and make amends. Surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

A person of his tribe recited the verse to him, upon which he said, "As far as I know, you are a truthful person and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is even more truthful than you; and Allāh is even more truthful than the two of you." He then reverted to Islām and practiced it very sincerely afterwards. He reflected upon the exception in the verse (*"Except those who repent..."*) and then. repented sincerely to Allāh. This incident highlights the fact that the repentance of a person who turns infidel *(kāfir)* after Islām is acceptable by Allāh.

"Verily those who disbelieve after believing, then increase in their disbelief their repentance shall never be accepted. These are indeed the ones gone astray." "Durrul Manthūr" reports that Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه stated that this verse refers to the Jews and the Christians who do not accept Islām until their dying moments, when their acceptance is futile. Repentance shall not be accepted at the time of death, as will be explained, Insha Allāh, in the discussion of the following verse of Surah Nisā: *"Until death presents itself before any of them they say, 'Now I truly repent'; nor those who die as infidels (kuffār)."* [*Surah 4, verse 18*]

Sayyidina Abul Ālia رحمة الله عليه says that this verse refers to the Jews and Christians who reverted to infidelity *(kufr)* after accepting Islām, then increased their disbelief. Then, remaining as infidels *(kuffār)*, they repent for their sins. This repentance shall never be accepted from them. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه interprets *"then increase in their disbelief*" to mean that they die as infidels *(kuffār)*.

"Verily those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, the earth full of gold shall never be accepted from any of them if they ever wish to offer it as ransom. Theirs shall be a painful punishment and they shall have no helpers." On the Day of Judgment none shall be able to ransom their souls, but even if it were possible, the entire world full of gold would not be accepted from the infidels *(kuffār)*.

Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"Indeed those who disbelieve, if they possessed all within the earth and the like thereof in addition to ransom themselves from the punishment of the Day of Judgment, it will not be accepted from them. Theirs shall be a painful punishment. They will try to escape from the fire, but they will not be able to escape and theirs will be a permanent chastisement."* [*Surah 5, verses 36/7*]

Reference should be made to verse 161 of Surah Baqarah for the detailed explanation of the verse *upon them will be the curse of Allāh, the angels and mankind at large.*

PART FOUR

(92)You shall never reach unto goodness until you spend of that which you love. Whatever good you spend, then certainly Allāh is Aware of it.

THE WEALTH MOST BELOVED TO ONE SHOULD BE SPENT IN THE WAY OF ALLĀH

This verse encourages spending in the path of Allāh and expresses that one cannot attain true goodness and virtue unless the wealth held most dear to the heart is spent in the path of Allāh. The venerable Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم were most eager to practise upon each command of Allāh, so when this verse was revealed, they assessed which of their wealth was most beloved to them and spent it in Allāh's way.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that Sayyidina Abu Talha رضى الله عنه was the wealthiest of all the Ansār in terms of the number of orchards that he owned in Madinah. Opposite the Mosque *(Masjid)*un Nabawi stood one of his orchards in which was a well named Bir Ha. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم often used to drink there. This was his most beloved orchard.

When the above verse was revealed, he presented himself before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "Bir Ha is dearest to me of all my wealth, so I wish to donate it in the way of Allāh, in anticipation of the reward thereof and so that it be stored as a treasure for me in the Hereafter. You may spend it as you please in a worthy cause." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commented, "This orchard has earned a grand profit! I propose that it be distributed amongst some of your relatives." Sayyidina Abu Talha رضى الله عنه accepted the proposal of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and distributed it amongst some of his cousins. [*Bukhari v.1 p. 197*]

"Durrul Manthūr" narrates other incidents similar to this. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه, upon hearing this verse, freed his most beloved Roman slave-girl called Mirjāna. Once Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه wrote to Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه to purchase a slave for him from the prisoners of Jalula. When she was presented before him, he recited the above verse and freed her.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Munkadir رحمة الله عليه relates that when the above verse was revealed, Sayyidina Zaid bin Hāritha رضى الله عنه donated his most precious horse in charity. (*"Durrul Manthūr" v.2 p.50)*

Every person holds a different thing beloved to himself and even a person who spends of his limited financial resources shall be included in the intention of the verse, since the little money he has is naturally dearest to him. The broad context of the verse encompasses all forms of charity, be they the obligatory Zakāh or optional sadaqa. Even though a person shall certainly attain reward for giving in charity those things that may be in excess to his needs (like discarded clothing, etc.), the full reward will only be had once a person spends the things that are most precious to him. It is for this reason that certain commentators translate the word "birr" (translated above as *"goodness")* to mean 'complete virtue' in reference to this complete reward to be attained for spending of the most beloved items of wealth. The verse does not mean that one should not spent of those things that are not beloved, but it encourages spending of the best.

"Whatever good you spend, then certainly Allāh is aware of it." Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that a person shall be in the protection of Allāh and all his shortcomings and sins will be concealed in both the worlds if he recites the following du'ā when wearing his clothes:

"Alhamdu Iillahil Ladhi Kasani Ma Uwaari Bihi Awrati Wa Atajammalu Bihi Fi Hayati"

(TRANSLATION: *All praise be to Allāh who has clothed me with that which conceals my shame and with which I beautify myself during my life)* [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.377 from Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah*]

۞ كُلُّ ٱلطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ مِن
قَبْلِ أَن تُنَزَّلَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ فَٱتْلُوهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَمَنِ
ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ قُلْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ
فَٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

(93) All food was lawful unto the Bani Isrā'īl except that which Isrā'īl forbade for himself before the Torah was revealed. Say, "Bring the Torah and read it to us if you are truthful." (94) Whoever, shall invent a lie upon Allāh after this, then these are indeed the oppressors. (95) Say, "Allāh has spoken the truth!" So follow the creed of Ibrahīm who pursued the truth while veering far away from falsehood, and was never from the idolaters.

WHAT WAS LAWFUL IN THE CREED OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام?

A narration in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.2 p.326*) states that the Jews objected to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "You claim to follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام whereas he never consumed the meat of camels, nor drank its milk. It seems that you are not really following him." In response, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that these things were lawful for Sayyidina

Ibrahīm عليه السلام. They retorted by saying that everything that was forbidden for Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was what was transmitted to them and, therefore, forbidden in their religion as well. Allāh revealed the above verse in refutation of this claim of theirs.

The verse declares that all types of food was permissible for the Bani Isrā'īl except those things that Isrā'īl [*Sayyidina Ya'qūb* عليه السلام] forbade upon himself before the revelation of the Torah. Commentators mention that the flesh and milk of camels were also lawful for them, as it was for Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام as well. These things were made forbidden by Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام for himself only, and his progeny (*the Bani Isrā'īl*) adhered to this practice of his. Allāh did not prohibit these foods in the Torah.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that Sayyidina Yaqub عليه السلام suffered from an illness called "Irqun Nisā". He took a vow to abstain from his most beloved food if he was cured. Since his favourite food was the meat and milk of camels, he forbade these two foods on himself once he was cured. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.2*]

The Jews thought that the prohibition stemmed from the time of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and consequently objected to the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم consumed these two foods while claiming to be from his creed.

"Say, 'Bring the Torah and read it to us if you are truthful (in your claim that these things were declared unlawful in the Torah). " Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام lived thousands of years before the recipient of the Torah i.e. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Therefore, it is not possible that these things were forbidden for Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام when the Torah says nothing about their prohibition.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.3*) states that the Jews were rendered speechless by this challenge and could not recite any substantiation from the Torah. He mentions further that this is also a proof of the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم since he had no previous knowledge of any of the past divine scriptures. He could only have received knowledge of this from divine revelation.

"Whoever shall invent a lie upon Allāh after this, then these are indeed the oppressors. "These people accepted falsehood after the truth was made apparent to them. This behaviour was a great oppression upon themselves as well as upon those who followed them.

THE INSTRUCTION TO FOLLOW THE CREED OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

"Say, 'Allāh has spoken the truth!' (i.e. all foods were originally Lawful (Halāl) for the Bani Isrā'īl). So follow the creed of Ibrahīm عليه السلام *who pursued the truth while veering far away from falsehood, and was never from the idolaters."* Whatever Sayyidina Isrā'īl عليه السلام forbade on himself for personal reasons will not be forbidden upon Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Therefore, the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام should still be adhered to; and this creed is none other than the religion of Islām.

This verse describes Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام as being "hanīfah." This (as translated) refers to him being strictly adherent to the truth and far away from all types of falsehood and false religions. He practised all the divine injunctions concerning Lawful and Unlawful, and never practiced polytheism *(shirk)*. Therefore, the Jews are also reminded of the fact that although they also claim to be his followers, they have resorted to polytheism and infidelity .

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾ فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ وَمَن دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

(96) Indeed the first house designated for man was the one at Bakkah which is blessed and a guidance for mankind. (97) Therein are clear signs, the place (Maqām) of Ibrahīm. Whoever enters therein shall be safe. Pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House is a duty unto Allāh for those of mankind who are able to find a way there. Whoever rejects, then surely Allāh is independent of the entire universe.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE KĀ'BA AND THE OBLIGATION OF HAJJ

"Rūhul Ma'āni" reports from Ibn Juraij رحمة الله عليه that the Jews claimed that the Baitul Muqaddas was superior in status than the Kā'ba. They made this claim on the grounds that it was the place of migration for numerous Prophets عليهم السلام, and because it was a pure and holy land. The Muslim maintained that the Kā'ba was really superior. Upon this altercation, the above verse was revealed.

Sayyidína Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that when the foregoing verse (*verse 95)* was revealed instructing the infidels *(kuffār)* to follow the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, the above verse followed to impress upon them the virtue and reverence of the Kā'ba, which formed part of this creed.

"......indeed the first house designated for man was the one at Bakkah, which is blessed and a guidance for mankind." This means that this first building built was at Makkah i.e. the Kā'ba. This is a place of "barakah," meaning that abundant good is present there. The rewards of actions performed there are greatly multiplied and the person performing Hajj or Umrah will be forgiven.

Besides this, there are also many blessings attached to it, which are referred to in the following verse of Surah Qasas. Allāh says, *"The fruits of everything are drawn here as a provision from Us"* [*Surah 28, verse 57]*. This is witnessed up to this day. Every kind of food and manufactured article can be found in Makkah and so many animals are slaughtered there, more than in any other part of the world.

"..........guidance for mankind." This means that it is a guide to Heaven *(Jannah)*. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.25*] The Muslims of the entire world also face towards it in their Salāh.

"..... the first house..." This means that the construction of Sayyidina Ibrāhīm

عليه السلام was not the first time that the Kā'ba was built. Its inception was before this. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.328*) records many other opinions in this regard.

Some commentators say that the Kā'ba was the first construction that appeared upon the water two thousand years before the creation of the heavens and the earth. At that time it was merely in the form of a white bubble and thereafter the earth spread out from underneath it. This is the opinion of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه.

Others like Sayyidina Ali bin Husain رحمة الله عليه (known as Zaynul Ābidīn) maintain that the Kā'ba was the first construction built upon the earth. Beneath His throne, Allāh appointed a place for the angels to make Tawāf, called the Baitul Ma'mūr. Then Allāh commanded the angels on the earth construct a similar place on earth directly beneath the original in the heavens (*Baitul Ma'mūr*). Those on the earth were commanded to make Tawāf of this Kā'ba.

Another opinion is that the angels constructed the Kā'ba two thousand years before the creation of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. When he used to make Hajj of the Kā'ba, the angels would tell him, "Oh Ādam, may Allāh accept your Hajj. We made Hajj of this house two thousand years before you."

All these narrations point to the fact that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was not the first constructor of the Kā'ba. For this reason he says in Surah Ibrahīm, *"Our Lord, indeed I have settled some of my offspring in a place of no vegetation, close to Your sacred house"* [*Surah 14, verse 37*]. He mentioned this despite the fact that there was no building there at the time.

Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"When We showed Ibrahīm the place of the house"* [*Surah 22, verse 26*]. Commentators mention that this verse means that Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was shown the appointed location of the Kā'ba since there was no visible structure there at that time.

THE DATE OF THE KĀ'BA'S CONSTRUCTION

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.17 p.142*) states that the Kā'ba was constructed a total of five times. The first time it was built by the angels from a red ruby, long before Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. It was then raised to the heavens during the floods of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Thereafter, Allāh instructed Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to rebuild it. Allāh sent a strong wind, which scattered the sands upon its foundation, thus making it apparent for him to view it. He constructed the Kā'ba upon this original location.

The third time it was rebuilt by the Quraish and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also participated in the reconstruction. When the time came to place the Hajratul Aswad (*Black stone*) into its position, the tribes argued about who would get the honour of doing this. They arrived at the agreement that whoever will emerge from a certain street and enter the Masjidul Harām, shall decide the matter. The first person was none other than the illustrious Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He was regarded by all as Al Amīn *(the trustworthy)*, so they all agreed to abide by his decision. He placed the black stone *(Hajjarul Aswad)* upon a shawl and then told the leaders of each tribe to lift the shawl *(Sheet)* towards the desired

location. When they all obliged, he then personally fitted it into position. This incident transpired fifteen years before declaration of his Prophethood.

The fourth reconstruction was that of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubair رضى الله عنه, and the fifth was by Hajjaj bin Yusuf, which still stands up to this day. Since this fifth occasion, only alterations and renovations have taken place, but no changes have been made to the original structure itself.

Certain other commentators have also made mention of the construction work undertaken by Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, his son Shīth عليه السلام, the Amāliqa and Bani Jurhum tribe [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.5*]. Bearing all this in mind, it is understood that the first construction was carried out by either Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام or the angels and, according to Ahādīth, even the reconstruction of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was before the building of the Baitul Muqaddas.

"BAKKAH" AND MAKKAH

The verse refers to the Kā'ba as being in *"Bakkah"*, which is commonly referred to as Makkah, as in verse 24 of Surah Fatah. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the "bā" and the "mīm" are similar in pronunciation and the Arabs often substitute the one for the other, resulting in the interusage of the words Makkah and Bakkah.

Other commentators like Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه mention a difference in the two words, saying that the word Bakkah refers specifically to the geographical location of the Kā'ba. Sayyidina Ikrama رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that the area between the two mountains is known as Bakkah and the rest is called Makkah. Another opinion states that the entire Haram is called Makkah. [*Al Jami'ul Latif fi Fadli Makkah wa Bina'i Baitish Sharif p. 136.*]

"Therein are clear signs, the place (Maqām) of Ibrahīm." Some of the signs are natural while others are holistic. Some of the holistic signs are that it is a *"guidance for mankind,"* a sanctuary of safety for the one who enters it and a place of pilgrimage for the one able to perform this sacred act.

Of the natural signs is the "Maqām" of Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, which is still in existence to this day. It is a stone that served the purpose of a stepladder, which Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام used to construct the Kā'ba. Another of these *"signs"* is that whoever attempted to destroy the Kā'ba was himself obliterated, as was the ease with the renowned incident of people of the elephants. Abraha, the leader of Yemen, marched with an army of elephants to destroy the Kā'ba, but Allāh sent a flight of birds who rained pebbles upon them, totally annihilating them. Mention is made of this incident in Surah Fīl (105th Surah of the Qur'ān).

These are the virtues cited concerning the Kā'ba. On the other hand, none of these can be said about the Baitul Muqaddas. It is not more blessed than the Kā'ba, neither will the Salāh performed there match the reward of the Salāh performed at the Kā'ba. It is also not the Qibla for Salāh, nor does the person entering it become safe.

"Whoever enters therein shall be safe." After completing the Kā'ba, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed to Allāh thus, *"O my Lord, make this city a place of security"*

[*Surah Baqarah, verse 126*]. This supplication *(du'ā)* of his was accepted and Makkah was made a place of safety. While the Arabs would kill and rob each other elsewhere, none would do so within the precincts of the Harām. Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"Do they not see that we have made the harām a place of safety, while people are being plundered in its vicinity?"* [Surah 29, verse 67]

It is narrated in Bukhari (*v.1 p.247*) that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh declared this city to be sacred the day He created the heavens and the earth, and it shall remain as such till the Day of Judgment, because of the sanctity of Allāh Himself. Fighting was never permitted for any before me, neither was it permitted for me except for a part of a day. It shall now remain sacred with the sanctity of Allāh till the Day of Judgment. So let not any thorn therein be cut, nor any of the game hunted, nor any lost item be lifted except with the intention of announcing for its owner, and even the grass may not be cut." Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه requested, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, make an exception for the grass of *'Idhkhir'* since it is used by the goldsmiths of Makkah and by its people for their homes (they used it for their roofs)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said, *"Except the Idhkhir grass."* i.e. this grass may be cut.

According to another narration the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily Allāh has declared Makkah to be sacred, but people have not. It is not permissible for the person who believes in Allāh and the Last Day to spill blood therein, nor to cut any of its trees. If any person uses the action of the messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم to justify his action, then tell him that Allāh had granted the concession for His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and not for him. Allāh has only granted me this permission for a part of the day, and this sanctity has now returned as it had been yesterday." [*Bukhari v.1 p.12*]

It is gathered from all of the above that the sanctity prayed for by Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام is prevalent to this day.

Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه and his companions رحمة الله عليه maintain that if someone kills or severs the limb of another within the Harām, then remains therein, retaliation *(Qisās)* shall be taken in the Harām itself. However, a person who does this outside the Harām, then enters it, shall be forced to emerge from there. None should sell anything to him, nor should any food be allowed to reach him so that he may emerge due to starvation. Only then that retaliation *(Qisās)* be taken.

Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه and Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه are of the opinion that Qisās be taken in each of the above cases [*Allāma Jassās* رحمة الله عليه *in Ahkāmul Qur'ān v.2 p.21*]. The opinion of Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه does not contradict the verse *"Whoever enters therein shall be safe,"* since the first situation conforms perfectly to it. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه is reported to have said, "The Harām grants safety to whoever seeks safety therein, except for the one who commits murder. The Harām shall not offer safety to him and he shall not be given anything to eat or drink until he emerges. When he comes out from the Harām, justice shall be taken from him." [*Ibn Kathīr* رحمة الله عليه *v.1 p.384*] This verdict of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه corresponds to that of Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه.

"Pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House is a duty unto Allāh for those of mankind who are able to find a way there." This verse specifies which people should perform the

Hajj. Once a person asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the meaning of *"a way there."* The reply was, "Funds (for the journey) and transport." According to another narration, a person enquired from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what it was that made Hajj obligatory. He replied, "Funds and transport." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 222*]

THE WARNING AGAINST NEGLECTING HAJJ

"Durrul Manthūr" narrates that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said, "I intend to dispatch people to all the cities to find those wealthy ones who have not performed Hajj. I shall impose the atonement *(Jizya)* on them. These people are not Muslims! These people are not Muslims!" It is also reported that he said, "If people neglect the Hajj, I shall fight them just like I would fight those who neglect Salāh and Zakāh."

It is learnt from the Qur'ān and Ahādīth that Hajj is incumbent on those who possess the means to go to and return from Makkah. Many people have this wealth but do not perform the Hajj. They should carefully consider these warnings.

Some people have burdened themselves with unnecessary expenses like purchasing expensive items and bringing elaborate gifts. All this they add to their Hajj expenses, thus inflating the cost quite considerably. For this reason, some find themselves incapable of performing the Hajj and leave this world as sinful neglecters of the Hajj obligation.

It also occurs that they possess sufficient wealth, but they delay in performing it due to extravagant wedding expenses or other such futile vanities. Others procrastinate and only perform the Hajj once they have become too old and weak to adequately perform the duties of Hajj. There are still others who remain waiting to fulfill their business obligations and pass on without performing the Hajj. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said that the person who is not prevented from Hajj by a pressing need, nor an oppressive ruler, nor an illness, and still does not perform the Hajj, may die either as a Jew if he pleases, or as a Christian. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 222 from Dārmi*]

Numerous millionaires die without ever performing the Hajj. They boastfully squander thousands on weddings, yet cannot find the heart to spend on Hajj. Others mock and jeer at the Hajj and some even deny its obligation, thereby including themselves in the ranks of the infidels. Those who, despite possessing the means and also accepting the obligation, yet do not perform the Hajj are not infidels but certainly perpetrate the action of the infidels *(kuffār)*.

These negligent people only harm themselves and do not hurt Allāh in the least. Allāh does not need the worship of any person, as He says thereafter, *"Whoever rejects, then surely Allāh is Independent of the entire universe."* This verse includes those who deny the obligation of Hajj as well as those who are practically negligent. The detailed laws of Hajj may be found in the books of Islāmic jurisprudence *(Fiqh)* and many have been passed in the commentary of the verse, *"Complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allāh"* [*Surah Baqarah, verse 196*]

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿98﴾ قُلْ
يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ تَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَأَنتُمْ
شُهَدَآءُ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿99﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تُطِيعُوا۟ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿100﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ
عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُۥ ۗ وَمَن يَعْتَصِم بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِىَ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ
﴿101﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿102﴾
وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً
فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم
مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿103﴾

(98) Say, "O People of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allāh when Allāh is Witness over what you do?" (99) Say, "Oh People of the Book, why do you prevent the believer from the way of Allāh, seeking some distortion therein, when you are yourselves witnesses? Allāh is not unaware of what you do." (100) O you who believe, if you obey a party from those who have been disbelievers after your belief. (101) How can you disbelieve when the verses of Allāh are recited to you and the messenger is in your midst? Whoever holds fast to Allāh has certainly been guided to the straight path. (102) O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims. (103) Hold fast to the rope of Allāh, all of you, and do not separate. Recall Allāh's bounty on you when you were enemies and He created love between your hearts and, by His grace, you became brothers thereafter. You were upon the brink of an abyss of the fire and He rescued you therefrom. In this way, does Allāh expound for you His revelation so that you may be guided.

DISCORD BETWEEN THE MUSLIMS BECAUSE OF THE TREACHERY OF THE JEWS AND THE COMMAND TO BE UNITED AND CONSOLIDATED

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v.2 p.57*) relates the incident of an old Jew by the name of Shās bin Qais. He was a staunch disbeliever and harboured great enmity and jealousy for the Muslims. He once passed by a gathering of certain individuals of the Aus and Khazraj tribes engaged in discussion. (There existed much enmity between these two tribes during the period of ignorance). He detested to see their reunion and congenial relationship, so he summoned Jewish youngster to sit with them to remind them of their previous conflicts and recite couplets to them with regard to "Yaumul Bu'āth" (This was an extremely furious battle between these two tribes in which the Aus were victorious).

In compliance with his instructions, the youngster sat with them and said

such things that rekindled old flames and each of the tribes began to boast of their superiority to the other. The situation reached such a stage that two persons actually started fighting and both parties resolved to do battle. The call to war was made from the Harra (a rocky plain of Madinah) and members of both tribes began to gather.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt of the situation, he, accompanied by a group of the Muhājirin, went to them and addressed them thus, "O party of Muslims! Fear Allāh! Are you now inspired by the call of the period of ignorance while I am still present with you and Allāh has guided you to Islām? How is this possible when Allāh has granted you honour by means of Islām, obliterated the things of ignorance rescued you from infidelity *(kufr)*, and created love between yourselves? Do you wish to revert to your previous condition of disbelief?"

Upon this address of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, both tribes realised that their incitement to fight was from Satan *(Shaytān)* and their enemies. They all cast aside their weapons, began to weep and hugged each other. In this way Allāh thwarted the scheme of the Jew, regarding whom two of the above verses were revealed viz. *"Say, 'O People of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allāh when Allāh is Witness over what you do? Say, 'O People of the Book, why do you prevent the believer from the way of Allāh, seeking some distortion, when you are yourselves witnesses? Allāh is not-unaware of what you do."*

With regard to the two who started the fighting (their names being Aus and Jabar) as well as those who joined them, Allāh revealed, *"O you who believe, if you obey a party from those who have been given the Book, they shall make you disbelievers after your belief... (up to the end of verse 105)."*

In the opening verses, Allāh addresses the Jews (Shās bin Qais being one of them) that they disbelieve in the revelation of Allāh, having full knowledge of the gravity of their action. They even placed obstacles in the way of the Muslims and sought to find faults in the religion of Allāh. They are warned to contemplate over their behaviour and hatred for the Muslims, since it shall cause them destruction in both the worlds.

The subsequent verses are directed to the Muslims (including Aus, Jabar and the others) that if they fall prey to the dictates of the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)*, they will not be allowed to remain upon Islām. A Muslim should be aware of the ways in which the infidels *(kuffār)* work and should understand that they are never content with Islām.

Allāh goes on to remind them, *"How can you disbelieve when the verses of Allāh are recited to you and the messenger is in your midst?"* By letting go of the verses of Allāh and the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, a Muslim shall be overcome by the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and become one of them. Therefore Allāh continues to say,

"Whoever holds fast to Allāh has certainly been guided to the straight path."

"O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared..." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه is reported to have said that the meaning of this verse is that a person should obey Allāh, abstain from His disobedience, remember Him and

never forget Him.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه interprets the verse to mean that a Muslim should fight in Jihād *(religion war)* as he is supposed to and he should never fear the taunts and censuring of others with regard to Allāh. He should be steadfast upon justice even though it may be in opposition to his very own parents. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.2 p.59*]

"...and do not die except as Muslims." This emphasises that a person should be firm upon Islām till his dying moments.

"Hold fast to the rope of Allāh, all of you, and do not separate." O Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Book of Allāh (*Qur'ān*) is His rope that is suspended from the heavens to the earth." According to another Hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "This Qur'ān is the rope of Allāh, one end of which is in His hand and the other is in your hands. Hold fast thereupon because whoever will do so shall never go astray." [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.2 p.60*]

Letting go of the Qur'ān causes a person to stray from the truth. The verse emphasises that the Muslims *"do not separate"* into various splinter groups, which is the inevitable result of leaving the Qur'ān. This is the factor that has weakened the Muslims and given the infidels *(kuffār)* the upper hand to manipulate the Muslims as they please.

"Recall Allāh's bounty on you when you were enemies He created love between your hearts and, by His grace, you became brothers thereafter. You were upon the brink of an abyss of the fire and He rescued you therefrom." The tribes of Aus and Khazraj were infidels *(kuffār)* (therefore on the brink of Hell) before Allāh guided them to Islām. There existed such enmity between them that, in the words of Ibn Is'hāq رحمة الله عليه, they fought a battle for 120 years. When they accepted Islām, Allāh extinguished the flames of war between them and created love and friendship between their hearts. *"In this way Allāh expounds for you His revelation so that you may be guided."* [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.2 p.61*]

A WORD OF CAUTION

These verses open with the instruction to fear Allāh as He should be feared and then advises people to die as Muslims and not to succumb to the deceptions of Satan *(Shaytān)*, the enemies of Islām and the love of the world. Thereafter Allāh instructs all the Muslims to stand as a united body, since unity is the backbone of any nation.

Unity can only be attained once the people of every tribe, nationality and region subdue their personal emotions and sentiments to strive for the establishment of the power and glory of Islām. One can well imagine the strength and might of the Muslims if they are all united under a single leader and all their countries, extending from the east to the west, are one.

The enemies of Islām have kindled the various prejudices amongst the Muslims, thereby dividing them into so many different petty states. They have spurred Arabs to detest living under the rule of non-Arabs; Yemenis, Iraqis and Syrians to dislike the leadership of the Hijāz. In a similar way Sindhis do not

want to be ruled by Panjabis, Bangalis refuse to be under the leadership of Pathāns and non-Bengalis reject to be governed by the Bengalis.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You should listen and obey your leader when he leads by the Book of Allāh, even if he be a person whose nose and ears are cut off." [*Muslim v.2 p. 120*]

In another hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Hearken and obey even though such a person is appointed over you who is an Abysinnian slave having a head as tiny as a raisin." [*Bukhari v.2 p.105*]

Sayyidina Ubada bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه narrates that they took allegiance by the hand of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they would hearken and obey during times of hardship and ease, willingly and unwillingly. They also swore to be obedient even though others be given preference over them. In addition to this they undertook to never fight their leader unless he was perpetrating clear infidelity, which was evident from the Book of Allāh. [*Muslim v.2 p.125*]

It is gleaned from these Ahādīth that the Leader of the Muslims *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* should be obeyed in all circumstances as long as he rules by the Qur'ān. All his orders must be adhered to even though they be contrary to one's personal desires and inclinations. Even if he does not act in accordance to one's advice, he should be obeyed, just as he would be obeyed when acting in accordance to the same.

By mentioning of an Abysinnian slave, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم eliminated the racial prejudice that may creep in, and by mentioning the person whose nose and ears are cut, he overruled the prejudice of physical features. In mentioning the Abysinnian, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also pointed to the fact that should a non-Quraish person become the Amīrul Mu'minīn (*contrary to the ideal*), he must also be supported.

It often occurs that a person may disagree with the opinion or approach of the Leader of the Muslims *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* and the thought may arise that he was wrong. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised the Ummah that such differences should be ignored and the Leader of the Muslims *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* ardently backed. The only exception will be if his decision is clearly in opposition to the Qur'ān, entailing an act of infidelity *(kufr)*.

There are many guidelines in the Ahādīth with regard to the relationship between the leader and his subordinates, but only so much has been cited above as shall be sufficient to ensure the consolidation and unity of the Muslim Ummah. The only solution to the plight if the Muslims is that they set aside all national, geographical and other differences and hold fast to the rope of Allāh. Linguistic and administrative differences should not be a cause of dispute, but a pious person should be appointed as the Leader of the Muslims *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)*. The inefficient European system of democracy should not be implemented since it would only serve to bring into power an incompetent and irreligious person.

Lesson: The above verse advocates unity *("Hold fast to the rope of Allāh, all of you...")*, then it warns against disunity *("and do not separate")*. This point is also emphasised in other verses such as in Surah An'ām where Allāh says, *"And*

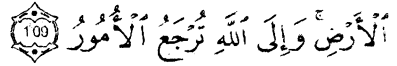
indeed this is my straight path, so follow it. Do not follow other paths, for they will deviate you from Allāh's path. These are the things with which Allāh has solemnly commanded you so that you may adopt piety (taqwa)." [*Surah 6, verse 153*]

Differences in the various schools of jurisprudence have never been a cause for disunity since Hanafis, Shafi'is, Mālikis and Hanbalis have always stood side by side, respecting each other. Even the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضي الله عنهم experienced differences in their interpretations of the various injunctions of Dīn *(religion)*, but they remained inseparable. If ever there existed any difference of considerable proportion, it was never due to, anything else but their affection and concern for the Dīn *(religion)*. These were all attributed to errors in personal Judgment since none of them ever wished to harm the Dīn *(religion)* in any way. Only those in pursuit of their personal motives cannot unite with the people of Haqq *(right)*.

Even enmity of 120 years (as existed between the Aus and Khazraj) can be transformed into brotherly love, so why can the mere national and political differences of today's Muslims not be solved in the interests of Islām's establishment? It is the responsibility of the leaders to practise Islām and encourage their subjects to do the same. At the same time, the greed of rule and dominate should be abated and then it shall easy to achieve unity.

The tragedy of today's circumstances is that the Muslim leaders have no association with Islām and even display their aversion to the laws of the Shari'ah and object to them. They prefer their positions of leadership to the greater interests of Muslim unity, even though the Muslim masses oppose them. In such a climate how can unity be possibly achieved?

There are people who are Muslim by name but, because of their objections against Islām and their incorrect beliefs, they join the ranks of the infidels *(kuffār)*. Such people are also included in the purport of the verse, *".... upon the brink of an abyss of the fire."* They may be saved from the terrible torment of the Hell by accepting Islām in the true perspective. The verse of Allāh is applicable till eternity when He says, *"In this way Allāh expounds for you His revelation so that you may be guided."*

وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (104) وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ
الْبَيِّنَاتُ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (105) يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ
اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ (106)
وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (107) تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ
نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (108) وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي

(104) There should be a group from you who invite towards good, enjoin right and forbid evil. These are indeed the successful ones. (105) Do not be like those who separated and disputed after the clear signs had come to them. For such people, there shall be an awful chastisement. (106) The day when some faces will be illuminated while others shall be darkened. As for those whose faces shall be darkened, it will be said to them, "Had you disbelieved after believing? So taste the punishment because of your disbelief." (107) As for those whose faces shall be illuminated, they will be in the mercy of Allāh, where they shall abide forever. (108) These are the verses of Allāh that We recite to you in truth. Allāh intends no oppression on the universe. (109) Unto Allāh alone belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and unto Him are all things returned.

THERE SHOULD ALWAYS BE A GROUP THAT CALL TO GOOD, ENJOIN RIGHT AND FORBID EVIL

The duty of every Muslim is to practise the teachings of Allāh' s book and that of His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They should continue doing good and abstaining from evil. At the same time, it is also their duty to prevent others from perpetrating evil and enjoin them to enact righteous deeds. It is not sufficient that a Muslim should himself be righteous, but he must also ensure that he invites others to do good, enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong. In this way the Islāmic social community may remain intact.

Due to the instigation of Satan *(Shaytān)* and the inherent bestiality within man, he is often distracted from the obligations *(Farāidh)* and compulsories *(Wājibāt)* of Dīn *(religion)*. For this reason, he has to be reminded to do good and abstain from evil.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL *(AMR BIL MA'RŪF WAN NAHY ANIL MUNKAR)*

The above verse invokes the Muslims that there should always be a group amongst them that will bear this responsibility of *"Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar"*. They should encourage others to do those deeds that attract the pleasure of Allāh and forbid them from doing anything that will invite His wrath.

After another five verses, the same subject is reiterated, and in Surah Taubah Allāh says, *"The believing men and the believing women are auxiliaries to each other. They enjoin good, forbid evil, establish Salāh, pay Zakāh, and obey Allāh and His messenger. These are the ones on whom Allāh shall soon shower mercy. Verily Allāh is Mighty, The Wise."* [*Surah 9, verse 71*]. *Besides these there are many more verses elucidating the importance of "Amr bil Ma'rūf wan Nahy anil Munkar"*. The above verse of Surah Taubah highlights the fact that this deed is an integral trait of every Muslim.

The Ahādīth are also replete with the virtues of enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar).* In a hadith of Muslim (*v.1 p.51*) the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever sees an evil deed should

prevent it with his hand. If he is unable to do this, he should change it with his tongue (stop it with his tongue). If he cannot even do this, then he should consider it an evil within his heart and this is the weakest form of Belief *(Imān)*."

It is thus understood that every person is entrusted with the duty of enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar*). The elders of a household and the managers of a firm or company possess the authority to enforce what is right and rectify the wrong. It is indeed sad that people now teach their children only the skills of the world and business. They pay no heed to educate them with regard to the obligations *(Farāidh)* and compulsories *(Wājibāt)* of Dīn *(religion)*!

THE NEGLIGENCE OF THOSE IN AUTHORITY

There are many people appointed to various positions of authority but do not concern themselves with instructing others with the *(Farāidh)* and compulsories *(Wājibāt)* of Dīn *(religion)*. They do not even bother to address the wrong being perpetrated before them and many in such positions indulge in major sins themselves. Not only do they fail to enjoin good, but they go to the extreme of commanding their subordinates to carry out sinful acts to maintain their positions. Salāh is also often found neglected in the performance of official tasks.

Describing the qualities of the people of Belief *(Imān)* when appointed to positions of authority, Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"They are such that if We grant them sovereignty in the land, they establish Salāh, pay Zakāh, enjoin right and forbid evil. The result of every action is with Allāh."* [*Surah 22, verse 41*]

THE PUNISHMENT IN THIS WORLD FOR DISCARDING ENJOINING GOOD AND FORBIDDING EVIL (*AMR BIL MA'RŪF WAN NAHY ANIL MUNKAR*)

The chastisement for discarding enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar*) despite possessing the capability is indeed very grievous. Although the person's position may seem favourable in this world, he will regret most bitterly in the Hereafter when he sees the result of it. The pending doom shall manifest itself in this world first and the person's prayers *(du'ās)* will not even be answered.

Sayyidina Jarīr bin Abdullah رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "When an individual of any group commits a sin and they do not prevent him despite being able to do so, Allāh shall inflict upon them a punishment before they leave this world." [*Abu Dawūd v.1 p.240*]

Jābir رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh once instructed Jibr'īl عليه السلام to overturn a particular town together with its residents. Jibr'īl عليه السلام said, 'O my Lord, there is a person from them who has not disobeyed You for the wink of an eye! *(Should he also be included in the punishment?)*' Allāh told him to overturn the town upon this person as well as the rest of them because his face never showed the slightest disapproval at the sins committed around him." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh", the chapter of "Amr bil Ma'rūf wan Nahy anil Munkar"*]

Sayyidina Hudhaifah رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exclaimed, "By the Being in whose hands my life lies! You people must enjoin good and forbid evil, otherwise Allāh will soon inflict a severe punishment upon you and then you will make supplication *(du'ā)* to Him and He will not accept them." [*Tirmidhi*]

It is gathered from this that enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar)* is of such importance that even the righteous person who neglects it shall be affected by Allāh's punishment. Even the supplications *(du'ās)* made when the punishment strikes shall be of no avail. Generally, people today are steeped in sin. Salāh and Zakāh are being neglected, lies are being spoken, false oaths are commonly taken and money is earned from falsehood. Stealing and robbery are all too common and people are being murdered. In the light of all of this, how can the punishment of Allāh be averted when there is none to speak against it? How shall supplications *(du'ās)* be accepted when the disaster does strike?

The hadith makes it clear that it is the requirement of every person's Belief *(Imān)* that he prevents evil as best as he can. The verse dictates that besides this duty of every person, there should be a group in every locality whose specific task is to invite towards good, coupled with the carrying out of enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar)*. This is such an obligation that is incumbent upon the Muslims of every locality, although if some enact it, the others shall be absolved of the responsibility *(Fardh Kifāyah)*.

The stipulation of a group does not mean that there has to be an organisation with a chairperson, a membership, a secretary and offices. It merely means that there be in the Ummah certain individuals who fulfill this task. Whether the government prepares such a group or not, the Muslim public should ensure that some people are actively accomplishing this duty. The number of such a group should be in accordance to the size of the Muslim community and able to deliver the message to every person.

Lesson: In this verse the phrase *"invite towards good"* precedes *"enjoin right and forbid from evil."* This is so because inviting towards good includes all forms of good, whether it be inviting the infidels *(kuffār)* towards Islām or enjoining the obligations *(Farāidh)*, compulsories *(Wājibāt)*, Sunan and Mustahabbāt *(optional acts of virtue)* upon the Muslims. People should also be enjoined to carry out the Mustahabbāt because although no sin shall be accrued for omitting them, there is great benefit in carrying them out. However, a hard attitude should not be adopted when enjoining these. When enjoining the obligations *(Farāidh)* and compulsories *(Wājibāt)*, a sterner approach should be adopted since they are more important. According to the prominence of the action, so much prominence should be given to the invitation towards that action.

There are many who neglect the obligations, yet are particular about propagating the optional acts of virtue. This approach is incorrect and not in conformity with the practice of the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The emphasis in an invitation should be proportional to the importance of the action in question.

Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه narrates from Sayyidina Abu Ja'far Bāqir رحمة الله

عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"There should be a group from you who invite towards good."* He then commented that the meaning of *"good"* is the Qur'ān and his Sunnah. [*v.1 p.49*]

WHO ARE THE SUCCESSFUL ONES?

With regard to the people who fulfill this duty of enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar)* Allāh says, *"These are indeed the successful ones."* Every person desires success but the measurement of success varies in every person's estimation. In the definition of the Qur'ān, the successful ones are those who do actions that secure Allāh's pleasure and are ultimately saved from the fire of Hell and enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. Since the person who carries out the above actions earns Allāh's pleasure, he is termed to be a successful person.

"Do not be like those who separated and disputed after the clear signs had come to them." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.22*) states that the verse refers to the Jews and the Christians who split and deviated. The Ummah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم are instructed not to imitate their ways. These people contradicted the orders given to them because of their love for the world and their subservience to their passions.

Many people subject the Dīn *(religion)* to their own desires, thereby leaving the Dīn *(religion)* altogether. Examples of such groups in the past were the Murjiya, the Karāmiya, the Mujassama, the Mushābiha, the Mu'attila and the Jahamiya. They all claimed to be Muslims but actually left the fold of Islām. Included with these groups are those who deny the authority of the Ahādīth, those who accept that the Qur'ān was changed as well as those who believe that other Prophets came after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Such groups that have deviated from Islām are warned that "For such people shall be an awful chastisement (on) the day when some faces will be illuminated while others shall be darkened. As for those whose faces shall be darkened, it will be said to them, 'Had you disbelieved after believing? So taste the punishment because of your disbelief"

THE DISFIGUREMENT OF THE INFIDELS *(KUFFĀR)* ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYAMAH)*

Other Surahs of the Qur'ān also attest to the illuminating and darkening of faces on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says at the end of Surah Abasa, *"On that day many faces shall be radiant, laughing and happy; and many faces will be covered in darkness, smitten with disgrace. These shall be the sinful disbelievers."* [*Surah 80, verse 38 to 42*]

The following verse appears in Surah Zumar, *"On the Day of Judgment you shall see the faces darkened of those who lied regarding Allāh."* [*Surah 39, verse 60*]

Allāh says in Surah Yunus, *"As for those who earned evil, the retribution for an evil deed shall be the like thereof and they will be steeped in disgrace, having no helper against Allāh. It shall be as if their faces are covered by a portion of an extremely dark night. These are the inmates of the fire, wherein they shall abide forever."* [*Surah 10, verse 27*]

"These are the verses of Allāh that We recite to you in truth. Allāh intends no oppression on the universe. Unto Allāh alone belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and unto Him are all things returned." Allāh is the sovereign and Master of all things and has complete control over everything. He shall do as He pleases and none can presen tan obstacle to Him.

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم مِّنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

(110) You are the best of all nations who have been raised for mankind. You enjoin what is right, forbid evil and believe in Allāh. If the Ahlul Kitāb (People of the Book) believe, then it shall be better for them. Some of them are believers while the majority are disobedient.

THE UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF THE UMMAH OF SAYYIDINA MUHAMMAD صلى الله عليه وسلم

This verse describes the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be the best from the Ummah of all the other Prophet عليه السلام. At the same time the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمhimself is the best of all the Prophet عليه السلام, as has passed in the discussion of the verse. *"When Allāh took the covenant from the Prophet عليه السلام... you shall believe in him and assist him..."* (*Surah Āl Imrān verse 81*)

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also stated, "I shall be the leader of all the children of Ādam عليه السلام on the Day of Judgment" [*Muslim v.2 p.245*]. In another narration he is reported to have said, "On the Day of Judgment I shall be .the leader of all the children of Ādam عليه السلام and this I say without any pride. In my hand will be the flag of praise, and this too I say without any pride. On that day, be it Ādam عليه السلام or any other Prophet عليه السلام, they will all beneath this flag. The earth shall open up for me first (I will be the first to emerge from the grave). This too I say without any pride." *["Mishkātul Masābīh" p.5 13 from Tirmidhi]*

Tirmidhi reports a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"You are the best of all nations who have been raised for mankind,"* then went on to say, "You terminate the 70th Ummah. You are the best of all Ummah *(followers)* and the most honoured in the sight of Allāh."

Together with mention of this Ummah being "Khairul Umam" *(the best of Ummah)*, the verse continues to describe the attributes of this Ummah saying, "You enjoin what is right, forbid evil and believe in Allāh." It is learnt from this that the distinguishing factor of this Ummah is its engagement in enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar)*. This is the duty of every individual of this Ummah, but at times it will be due obligation *(Fardh Ain)*, sometimes Sufficiency obligation *(Fardh Kifāyah)*, while sometimes it may even be Wājib or Sunnah.

"Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.28*) quotes the following statement of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. He said, "O people, if you wish to be part of this Ummah, then you should fulfill Allāh's condition i.e. enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar*). The virtues of this noble action have passed above.

In this verse the action of enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar*) is mentioned before that of Belief (*Imān*) (*"and believe in Allāh"*), whereas Belief (*Imān*) should precede any other action since it is the precondition for the acceptance of any act. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" mentions three reasons for this. One of these is that in this particular verse, Allāh wishes to specifically draw attention to enjoining Good and forbidding Evil (*Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar*). Thereafter, so that the prerequisite for all actions is not forgotten, mention is made of Belief (*Imān*). Other commentators mention that Belief (*Imān*) was mentioned here so as to link the verse with the next verse that talks of the Belief (*Imān*) of the Ahlul Kitāb (*People of the Book*).

MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK ARE DISOBEDIENT

"If the Ahlul Kitāb (People of the Book), believe then it shall be better for them. Some of them are believers while the majority are disobedient." It is gleaned from this verse that upon the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, belief in the previous Prophet عليه السلام and divine scriptures was only acceptable when coupled with belief in him and the Qur'ān. Some of the Ahlul Kitāb (*People of the Book*) accepted this (like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه and some others), but the majority opted not to believe, being prevented from doing so by worldly motives.

لَن يَضُرُّوكُمْ إِلَّآ أَذًى ۖ وَإِن يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ يُوَلُّوكُمُ ٱلْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١١١﴾
ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلذِّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا ثُقِفُوٓا۟ إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَسْكَنَةُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
وَيَقْتُلُونَ ٱلْأَنۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا۟ وَّكَانُوا۟ يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾ ۞ لَيْسُوا۟ سَوَآءً ۗ مِّنْ
أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أُمَّةٌ قَآئِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ءَانَآءَ ٱلَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ
وَيُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَن
يُكْفَرُوهُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

(111) They will only be able to hurt you a little bit and if they fight you they shall turn back and flee; thereafter they shall have no assistance. (112) Disgrace has been smitten upon them wherever they be found except by the rope from

Allāh and the rope from man. They return with the wrath of Allāh and wretchedness has been laid on them. This is because they used to reject the verses of Allāh and wrongfully murder the Prophet. This is because they were disobedient and used to transgress the limits. (113) They are all not alike. From the People of the Book are a group who are staunch upon the truth, reciting the verses of Allāh through the night, falling prostrate. (114) They believe in Allāh and the Last Day, enjoin good, forbid evil and hasten to do good deeds. These are the righteous ones. (115) Whatever good they do shall not be disparaged and Allāh is Aware of the pious.

THE DISGRACE AND WRETCHEDNESS OF THE JEWS

During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the enmity of the Jews was openly displayed and was also vented in secret. They even verbally abused those Jews who accepted Islām, like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضي الله عنه. The Muslims were always on guard, fearing the worst from them. Allāh consoled the Muslims by saying, *"They will only be able to hurt you a little bit and if they fight you (in battle) they shall turn back and flee; thereafter they shall have no assistance."* After this, Allāh continued to comment on their condition of disgrace and distance from Allāh.

THE PRESENT JEWISH STATE

"Disgrace has been smitten upon them wherever they be found except by the rope from Allāh and the rope from man." They shall only be able to escape this disgrace in this world by entering into a truce with Allāh or with other people (referred to as a "rope"). This may be when they come to an agreement with the Muslims that the one group does not harm the next or if they agree to pay the atonement *(Jizya)* to the Muslim state, in which case they will be accorded the rights of a Dhimmi (a non-Muslim citizen of a Muslim country). It may also mean that they enter into a peace treaty with another country, whereby the security of both parties is guaranteed.

Since the inception of the Jewish state of Isrā'īl, people have been querying the verses that declare that the Jews will be disgraced wherever they may be. The Qur'ān is, of course, unquestionable. This objection is unfounded because the verses in question do not mention that this disgrace will last till the judgment day *(Qiyamah)*. No verse, nor any hadith substantiates the fact that this condition of theirs shall be everlasting in this world. It is therefore understood that they will suffer disgrace for prescribed period of time, whereafter they will acquire some dignity in their own state (like Isrā'īl).

Then too, the establishment of their state is a result of a *"rope from man."* A mutual treaty with certain Christian countries established their state and it is with complete reliance and support from them that it remains in existence. Therefore, the exclusive situation of *"the rope from man"* may secure temporary honour and prestige for them. The verse does make this exception, which we witness them acting upon today.

Thereafter Allāh continues to elucidate that they earned the wrath of Allāh as well as wretchedness and the reason for this is also cited, *"They return with the wrath of Allāh and wretchedness has been laid on them. This is because they used to*

reject the verses of Allāh and wrongfully murder the Prophet. This is because they were disobedient and used to transgress the limits."

A WORD OF PRAISE FOR THOSE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK WHO ACCEPTED ISLĀM

Allāh states, *"They* [the Ahlul Kitāb *(People of the Book)*] *are all not alike. From the People of the Book are a group who are staunch upon the truth, reciting the verses of Allāh through the night, falling prostrate. They believe in Allāh and the Last Day, enjoin good, forbid evil and hasten to do good deeds. These are the righteous ones. Whatever good they do shall not be disparaged and Allāh is Aware of the pious."*

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَن تُغۡنِيَ عَنۡهُمۡ أَمۡوَٰلُهُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيۡـٔٗاۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِۚ هُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿116﴾ مَثَلُ مَا يُنفِقُونَ فِي هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا
كَمَثَلِ رِيحٖ فِيهَا صِرٌّ أَصَابَتۡ حَرۡثَ قَوۡمٖ ظَلَمُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمۡ فَأَهۡلَكَتۡهُۚ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ وَلَٰكِنۡ أَنفُسَهُمۡ يَظۡلِمُونَ ﴿117﴾

(116) Indeed neither the wealth nor the children of the disbelievers shall be of any avail to them against Allāh. These are the inmates of the fire wherein they shall abide forever. (117) The example of that which they spend in the path of Allāh is like that of an icy wind that strikes the crops of a nation who have oppressed themselves; utterly destroying it. Allāh never oppressed them but they oppress themselves.

THE WEALTH AND CHILDREN OF THE INFIDELS *(KUFFĀR)* SHALL NOT SAVE THEM FROM CHASTISEMENT

The tenth verse of Surah Āl Imrān contains a similar message as the first verse above. The second recounts the similitude of the charity of the infidels, as well as that which they spent in combating the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم. The analogy is that of the crops of a nation which oppressed itself by engaging in infidelity *(kufr)* and disobedience. An icy wind blows across these fields, utterly destroying them with the resultant frost and cold. By way of punishment for their ill deeds, their flourishing crops were obliterated. *"Allāh never oppressed them but they oppress themselves (by perpetrating such deeds that attract the wrath of Allāh)."*

Even though they carry out acts of charity with good intentions, the infidels *(kuffār)* shall find no reward in the Hereafter. All their actions, especially those to the detriment of Islām, will be wasted. Their actions shall earn them only destruction in this very world and then in the Hereafter. Allāh says in Surah Ibrāhīm, *"The example of the deeds of those who reject their Lord is like that of ashes blown away by a gust on an extremely windy day. They shall be unable to exercise control over anything that they had earned. This is a gross deviation."* [*Surah 14, vers. 18*]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ بِطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا۟ مَا عَنِتُّمْ
قَدْ بَدَتِ ٱلْبَغْضَآءُ مِنْ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِى صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ ۚ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ ۖ
إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿118﴾ هَٰٓأَنتُمْ أُو۟لَآءِ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْكِتَٰبِ كُلِّهِۦ وَإِذَا
لَقُوكُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا۟ عَضُّوا۟ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ ٱلْغَيْظِ ۚ قُلْ مُوتُوا۟ بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿119﴾ إِن تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِن تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ
يَفْرَحُوا۟ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا
يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿120﴾

(118) O you who believe, do not take as confidants those besides your own people. These people would spare no pains to ruin you. They wish for that which causes you suffering. Enmity has been manifested from their tongues, but what their hearts conceal is far worse. Indeed We have made the revelation clear to you if you will understand. (119) You are the ones who love them though they have no love for you, and you believe in the complete Book. When they meet you they say, "We believe!" between they are alone they bite their fingertips in rage. Tell them, "Perish in your rage! Surely Allāh is Aware of what is within the hearts." (120) It ails them if good comes to you, but if affliction strikes you, they rejoice. If you persevere and adopt taqwa, their schemes can never affect you in the least. Verily Allāh encompasses their actions.

DO NOT TAKE THE INFIDELS *(KUFFĀR)* AS CONFIDANTS

The above verses mention the enmity of the infidels *(kuffār)* in great detail and this is expect of them since no less can be expected of an enemy. The first warning sounded is *"O you who believe, do not take as confidants those besides your own people. These people would spare no pains to ruin you."*

THE MISERABLE CONDITION OF THE MUSLIMS

History bears testimony to the fact that the muslims have suffered tragic consequences whenever they disregarded this Qur'ānic advice. The enemies have gained the upper hand by taking into their confidence certain muslim by bribing them with money or position. These hapless muslims then reveal all the secret and classified information of the Muslims to these enemies of Islām. In this way, the antagonistic forces have planted spies in the Muslim countries who disclose to them highly confidential information, by which the Muslims are constantly manipulated and key Muslim figures are assassinated. Despite professing the Kalimah of Islām, these people cause the Muslims more harm that can be expected from the enemies themselves.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF ASSUMING THAT THE INFIDELS *(KUFFĀR)* ARE WELL-WISHERS

Friendship with the infidels *(kuffār)* can never be tolerated in Islām. Certain

muslim governments, who have been instituted by the infidels *(kuffār)*, pander to every wish of the infidels because they fear that another government may substitute them. Their infidels masters taught them to beguile the masses by claiming that they wish to establish Islāmic rule, whereas if someone else has to try to do this, he is executed or dismissed. The very fact that they gained power with the backing of the infidels is contrary to the Shari'ah.

"They wish for that which causes you suffering." All the infidels *(kuffār)* belong to the same creed and are all the enemies of Islām irrespective of which denomination or religion they belong to. Whenever the opportunity arises, they collectively converge upon the Muslims like a pack of hungry wolves. As the Jews did in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, some actually declare their enmity, as Allāh says, *"Enmity has been manifested from their tongues, but what their hearts conceal is far worse."*

The Muslims are repeatedly given reminders in verses such as the following, when Allāh says, *'indeed We have made the revelation clear to you if you will understand."*

A REPRIMAND FOR THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE MUSLIMS

Allāh declares, *"You* (Muslims) *are the ones who love them* (*the infidels) though they have no love for you, and you believe in the complete Book."* The Muslim even believes in the previous scriptures revealed to these people while they do not believe in the Qur'ān, neither do they have any affinity for their own scriptures as the Muslims do.

"When they meet you they say, 'We believe!' but when they are alone they bite their fingertips in rage." They are furious at the rate with which Islām flourishes and cannot bear to see its constantly multiplying masses. This fury is futile and Allāh says, *"Tell them, 'Perish in your rage!"* The glory of Islām shall not falter, nor will it be impeded by the anger of these people. Islām will dominate over all other religions.

"Surely Allāh is Aware of what is within the hearts." Allāh knows what lurks in their hearts of the infidels and has informed the Muslims to be wary of them. They shall ultimately meet their chastisement in the Hereafter.

'It ails them if good comes to you, but if affliction strikes you, they rejoice." Can such people be expected to have love for the Muslims?

"Durrul Manthūr" reports a narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه wherein he relates an incident with regard to the revelation of the verse, *"O you who believe, do not take as confidants those besides your own people."* He mentioned that there were certain people who had developed friendship with the Jews of Madinah during the period of ignorance, and they were even allies in war. After accepting Islām, these people maintained their relationships with these Jews. Allāh revealed these verses to forbid such ties.

Although it is permissible to engage in business and social dealings with these people, it is not permitted that they enjoy such an intimate relationship whereby they become aware of the personal affairs of the Muslims. Although the verse may have been in reference to the situation prevailing in Madinah, the

Qur'ān applies to people of every century and is as pertinent today as it was then.

The mischief and instigation of the Jews are prevalent to this day; it is only the location and scale that have changed. They have a great influence over the Christian countries and even employ muslims to harm the muslims. To achieve their heinous aims they use extremely secretive measures which the common man does not perceive.

The question then arises as to why do the infidels *(kuffār)* always seem to be on the winning side? The next verse provides the answer to this and provides the Muslims with the ultimate solution till the Day of Judgment. Allāh says, *"If you persevere and adopt piety (taqwa), their schemes can never affect you in the least."* By practising patience, doing good deeds and abstaining from sins, Muslims can overcome the onslaught of their enemies. These are the real weapons to ward off their attack.

"Verily Allāh encompasses their actions." He shall give them their due punishment according to His wisdom and wishes.

Lesson: There is a great lesson to be learnt from the prohibition of adopting the infidels as confidants and friends. Muslims today still keep them as friends when the Qur'ān says, *"These people would spare no pains to ruin you."* The Jews, Christians and those who profess Islām but have corrupted beliefs (the Rawāfidh being in the forefront) are the real sworn enemies of Islām and the Muslims.

From the beginning of Islāmic history, these people have left no stone unturned to harm the cause of Islām. To consider them to have good intentions towards the Muslims is sheer foolishness. If they could have helped it, they would not have allowed Islām to cross the boundaries of Makkah. However, they have not managed to curtail the rampant spread of Islām and Allāh says, *"Tell them, 'Perish in your rage! Surely Allāh is Aware of what is within the hearts."*

وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَـٰعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿121﴾ إِذْ هَمَّت طَّآئِفَتَانِ مِنكُمْ أَن تَفْشَلَا وَٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا ۗ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿122﴾

(121) When you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] set forth in the morning from your family, briefing the believers about the positions for battle. Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing. (122) When two groups from you intended to desert and Allāh is their Protecting Friend. On Allāh alone should the believers rely.

THE BATTLE OF UHUD

The above verses briefly mention the battle of Uhud. The verses that follow contain more details. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم began preaching in Makkah, the idolaters turned hostile towards him. Great persecutions followed and much suffering had to be endured by the Muslims for 13 years. In these trying conditions they continued to propagate Islām, and were eventually forced to leave Makkah.

Upon the invitation of the Ansār, they migrated to Madinah, but even there the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* of Makkah did not leave them alone. Here the Jews were always instigating problems and the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* surfaced as a group proclaiming to be Muslims but concealing infidelity *(kufr)* in their hearts. Since the infidels *(kuffār)* were a constant threat and enemy of the Muslims, the Qur'ān prohibited friendship with them.

In the second year after Hijrah (*migration*), the infidels *(kuffār)* of Makkah marched with a large army and confronted the Muslims at a place called Badr. Here a decisive battle took place and the resultant victory of the Muslims made truth apparent from falsehood. Some mention of the battle of Badr will follow shortly and much has already passed at the beginning of Surah Āl Imrān. The details of this battle are found in the opening part of Surah Anfāl as well as later in the same Surah.

CONSULTATION WITH THE COMPANIONS *(SAHĀBA)* رضی الله عنهم UPON THE OCCASION OF THE BATTLE OF UHUD

This battle took place in the third year after migration *(Hijrah)*. The Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* were still smarting after their defeat at Badr where a poorly equipped contingent of 313 Muslims vanquished a strong, fully armed army three times their number. Seventy infidels *(kuffār)* were killed at Badr and another seventy were taken captive to Madinah. The following year, the Quraish made a collection and decided to march against the Muslims. The large army reached Mount Uhud near Madinah where they set up their camp.

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه و سلم consulted with the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم. His personal opinion was that they remain in Madinah and fight off the onslaught from within the city. However, those Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم who had not participated in Badr, opted to march out of the city and to fight the infidels *(kuffār)* at Uhud, anticipating the same victory that they achieved the previous year at Badr. Upon their insistence, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم decided to march out of the city and made the necessary preparations. He thus wore his armour and helmet.

Although the final decision was to march out of the city, The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did recount to the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم certain dreams he saw. He saw himself in strong armour, which he interpreted, as the city of Madinah itself. He also saw in a dream that his sword become bent, which he interpreted as a form of defeat. Besides this, he also saw a bull being slaughtered, but it escaped. The purpose of relating these dreams was to stress that it would be best for the Muslims to remain in Madinah and that they may suffer a defeat if they fought outside the city.

Certain Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم proposed that, according to their experience, whenever they fought from within the town, they were victorious and whenever the fight was taken outside the town, they were defeated. For this reason, these individuals were of the opinion that the Muslims fight from within Madinah. Later even those who had strongly suggested that they fight outside Madinah, began to regret their stance and approached the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم to change the plan of action. However, since he had already worn his

armour, he told them, "It is not appropriate for a Prophet to return after he has adorned his battle dress and issued the instruction to engage the enemy in combat. When I did propose to you that we remain in Madinah, you opted not to do so. Now that the decision has been taken, you should adopt piety *(Taqwa)*, be firm against the enemy and carry out the orders of Allāh."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led an army of one thousand to Uhud, while the enemy was three thousand strong. Upon reaching a certain station, Abdullāh bin Ubay bin Salūl, who was the leader of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*, deserted the army with three hundred men, and returned to Madinah. The Muslims were thus left with only seven hundred soldiers. When these Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* deserted, two tribes of the Ansār (*the Banu Salama and Banu Hāritha*) also grew hesitant and some degree of cowardice crept into their hearts. However, Allāh granted them courage and they pressed onwards. It was this that Allāh refers to in the verse, *"When two groups from you intended to desert and Allāh is their Protecting Friend. On Allāh alone should the believers rely.*

Upon reaching the slopes of Uhud, the Muslim army camped in a valley, with the mount behind them, so as to face the enemy in the plain before them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commissioned fifty Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم to guard a pass between the mountains, appointing Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Jubair رضى الله عنه as their leader. They were issued with strict instructions not to leave their posts, irrespective of the situation. They were told not to move from these positions whether the Muslims were winning or losing, even if they saw vultures devouring the corpses of the Muslims. Their duty was to fire arrows at the enemy to ensure that they do not attack the Muslims from that particular direction.

The flag of the Muslims was held by Sayyidina Mus'ab bin Umair رضى الله عنه and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم directed field operations by arranging the army in their respective positions. Allāh refers to this in the verse, *"When you set forth in the morning from your family, briefing the believers of the positions for battle."*

As the battle progressed, Allāh granted victory to the Muslims and the enemy began to retreat. It then happened that the archers appointed to the position at the mountain pass started to differ upon the situation. Some felt that the battle was now over and left their posts to assist in gathering the booty. It was only the leader of the group and a few others who remained at their positions according to instructions. Although the idolaters were already in flight by then, they quickly exploited the opportunity and then attacked the Muslims from the direction of the pass, turning the tide of the battle in their favour.

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿123﴾ إِذْ تَقُولُ
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَن يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَن يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِثَلَٰثَةِ ءَالَٰفٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ ﴿124﴾
بَلَىٰٓ ۚ إِن تَصْبِرُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِخَمْسَةِ ءَالَٰفٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿125﴾ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِۦ ۗ وَمَا

ٱلنَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿126﴾ لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَوْ
يَكْبِتَهُمْ فَيَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَآئِبِينَ ﴿127﴾

(123) Allāh had undoubtedly assisted you at Badr when you were in a weak position. So fear Allāh so as to express gratitude to Him. (124) When you told the believers, "Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord reinforces you with three thousand angels, (specially) dispatched?" (125) Surely, if you adopt piety *(taqwa)* and the enemy attack you this instant, your Lord shall assist you with five thousand marked angels. (126) Allāh had only granted this assistance only as a glad tiding for you and so that your hearts may take solace thereby. Assistance is only from Allāh, The Mighty, The Wise. (127) So that He may destroy a party of the disbelievers or disgrace them, and they return as losers.

THE VICTORY AT BADR

While the incident of Uhud still remains to be completed, Allāh makes brief mention of the battle of Badr, where the Muslims achieved an astounding victory through the help of Allāh. When the victory at Badr is viewed before the temporary defeat at Uhud, it is even more phenomenal: This is so because at Badr, 70 of the infidels *(kuffār)* were killed and a further 70 were taken captive, while at Uhud 70 Companions *(Sahāba)* رضي الله عنهم were martyred. Mention of the battle of Badr also serves to instill more courage in the Muslims.

"When you told the believers, 'Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord reinforces you with three thousand angels, (specially) dispatched?" This verse reminds the Muslims of the descent of the angels upon the occasion of Badr. Allāh sent them to fight with the Muslims, thereby granting them courage and support. According to many commentators, this reinforcement of the angels was exclusive to Badr and not to Uhud. They say that at first Allāh sent one thousand angels (*according to a verse in Surah Anfāl*), then three thousand, followed by five thousand.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.4 p.347*) reports that Sayyidina Qatada رحمة الله عليه said that it was due to the piety *(taqwa)* and perseverance of the Muslims at Badr that Allāh sent to them five thousand angels. Sayyidina Dahāk and Ikrama رحمة الله عليه are reported to have said that Allāh promised this assistance to the Muslims at Uhud on the precondition of patience. This did not reach them since they failed to comply with the condition. According to the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni", the accepted opinion is that the mention of five thousand angels refers to the battle of Badr.

"...marked angels." "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.46*) reports from Ibn Is'hāq and Tabrāni رحمة الله عليه the statement of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه that the angels at Badr all wore white turbans, the tails of which hung at their backs. At the battle of Hunayn, their turbans were red. However, there are other opinions cited in the books of tafsīr.

"Allāh had granted this assistance only as a glad tiding for you and so that your hearts be take solace thereby. Assistance is only from Allāh, The Mighty, The Wise."

This very verse appears in Surah Anfāl with a slight variation. It states that the assistance rendered by Allāh enabled the Muslims take solace and not to fear the infidels *(kuffār)*. It tells us further that it shall only be those to whom Allāh grants His assistance that will be victorious and that the assistance of any other party is irrelevant. According to His divine wisdom, He assists people and if He so decrees, He may not assist, as He did in the battle of Uhud.

"So that He may destroy a party of the disbelievers or disgrace them, and they return as losers." This verse cites the reason for Allāh's assistance at the Battle of Badr. This is exactly what happened in Badr, when 70 leaders of the Quraish were killed, 70 were captured and the rest returned as losers to Makkah. Even their superior numbers and weapons could not aid them against the small divinely aided party.

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿128﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿129﴾

(128) You have no choice in the matter. If Allāh wills, He shall grant them the ability to repent, or He may punish them, for they are indeed oppressors. (129) To Allāh belongs what is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. He pardons whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

ALLĀH RESERVES JUDGMENT IN ALL MATTERS

This verse resumes mention of the battle of Uhud. "Asbābun Nuzūl" (p. 116) reports from Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه that during the battle of Uhud, some teeth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were lost and he received serious injuries to his face. On this occasion, he said, "How can that nation be successful who draw blood from the face of their Prophet who calls them towards Allāh?" Upon this the verse was revealed viz. *"You have no choice in the matter. If Allāh wills He shall grant them the ability to repent, or He may punish them, for they are indeed oppressors."*

Allāh has control over everything and He shall do as He pleases. All, including the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should be patient and Allāh shall either grant them Belief *(Imān)* and the opportunity to repent, or punish them should they die as infidels *(kuffār)*. Consequently, many of those who fought against the Muslims in the battle of Uhud accepted Islām. Of these, were Sayyidina Abu Sufyān رضى الله عنه and his wife Hinda, who chewed the liver of the uncle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Sayyidina Hamzah رضى الله عنه. Others were Sayyidina Safwān bin Umayyah and Sayyidina Wahshi رضى الله عنه who martyred Sayyidina Hamzah رضى الله عنه.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَأْكُلُوا۟ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓا۟ أَضْعَٰفًا مُّضَٰعَفَةً ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿130﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿131﴾ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿132﴾ ۞ وَسَارِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿133﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِى ٱلسَّرَّآءِ
وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَٱلْكَٰظِمِينَ ٱلْغَيْظَ وَٱلْعَافِينَ عَنِ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿134﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟ فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟
لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا۟ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿135﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿136﴾ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ
فَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿137﴾ هَٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ
وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿138﴾

(130) O you who believe, do not consume usury, compounding it many times over. Fear Allāh so that you may be successful. (131) Fear the fire that has been prepared for the disbelievers! (132) Obey Allāh and the messenger so that mercy be shown to you. (133) Hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and that Paradise (Jannah) which has the expanse of the heavens and the earth, which has been prepared for the pious... (134) Those who spend in ease and adversity, swallow their anger and forgive people. Allāh loves those who do good... (135) Those who, if they perpetrate an evil or oppress themselves, they remember Allāh and repent for their sins. Who can pardon sins besides Allāh? And they do not intentionally persist upon what they do. (136) The reward for these people shall be forgiveness from their Lord and such gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever. Excellent indeed is the reward for the workers. (137) Numerous practices have passed before you so travel in the earth and see what was the plight of those who belied. (138) This is a discourse for mankind, a guidance and a lesson for the pious.

PROHIBITION AGAINST USURY AND THE INSTRUCTION TO HASTEN TOWARDS DIVINE PARDON

The discussion on the battle of Uhud has not yet terminated when Allāh mentions certain acts for us to abstain from, obedience to Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the reward for the doers of good deeds. Here, general reference is made to certain actions, while specific reference to the disobedience in Uhud will be mentioned later in the verse, *'it was only Shaytān who misled them in some of their actions."*

These verses teach us that the committing of sins brings calamities upon people and obedience to Allāh averts them. Special reference is made to usury. It is such a sin that makes a person worldly-minded and removes all piety from his heart. It transforms him into one who focuses only on the accumulation of wealth, without any compassion for another.

Where Allāh mentions that usury is forbidden *"compounding it many times over"* does not mean that taking just a little is permissible. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said even a single Dirham of interest consumed intentionally is worse than committing adultery 36 times. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.246 from Ahmad and Dar Qutni*]

It is common practice that the interest on loans is compounded when payment is not prompt. In this way additional interest is continuously added to the principle sum plus the interest, making the repayable amount multiply many times over. The verse makes mention of this evil practice of compounding.

Usury has been mentioned in the discussion of the battle of Uhud because the usurers, engrossed in their parsimonious financial affairs, do not see to the demands of their Belief *(Imān)* by participating in Jihād *(religion war)*. The warnings sounded for the consumption of interest have passed under the discussion of the verse, *"Those who consume usury shall not stand except like the one who the Satan 'Shaytān' has driven insane by his touch,"* (*Surah Baqarah, verse 275*)

After this, Allāh instructs the fear of Allāh piety *(taqwa)* which shall save one from the fire of Hell. Piety *(Taqwa)* basically means to refrain from sins.

"Fear the fire that has been prepared for the disbelievers!" This verse indicates that Hell is really meant for the infidels *(kuffār)* and the Muslim who, due to sinning, finds himself there should indeed be ashamed of himself. He should never be found in the quarters of the enemy, let alone his place of punishment. This punishment shall not be light but extremely severe. A Muslim must rather aspire to be amongst the chosen servants of Allāh, for whom the gardens of Heaven *(Jannah)* have been prepared. Why should one opt for the worst of the two?

"Obey Allāh and the messenger so that mercy be shown to you." It is evident from this verse that the thing which attracts Allāh' s mercy is obedience to Allāh and His messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"Hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and that Heaven (Jannah)..." Each person should compete with the other in doing such actions that earn admission into Heaven *(Jannah)*.

"..... which has the expanse of the heavens and the earth..." Since man has only the expanse of the heavens and the earth before him, this example is cited so as to make it easy for him to understand [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.56*]. In actual fact, Heaven *(Jannah)* is much larger than this, as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned in a hadith that the Heaven *(Jannah)* of the last person to enter shall be ten times larger than this world, and more. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" v.2 p.492*]

The Being who has created the heavens and the earth is perfectly Capable of creating things much larger. People have hardly reached the limits of the

heavens, but having seen the earth, they say that they cannot see that which the Qur'ān and Ahādīth speak of. At the outset, it should be understood that they have not necessarily explored the entire earth. Even if they had done so, there still exists another six of these earths and heavens. Between each of these are distances unimagined, and no one can even hope to get close to the sun! It is therefore sheer ignorance to claim that they have searched the universe thoroughly and can still not find Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell. They have not even explored the visible heavens and earth, how can they be expected to find what is beyond these?

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.351*) writes that the verse mentions the word "arduha" *("the expanse of which")* which really refers to the width and breadth of Heaven *(Jannah)*. It can be noted from this that the length is even vaster.

A person once asked Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه whether Heaven *(Jannah)* was in the skies or in the earth. He replied, "Which skies and earth can possibly accommodate Heaven *(Jannah)*?" It was then asked where is it then. He said, "It is above the seven heavens and beneath the throne of Allāh." Sayyidina Qatada رحمة الله عليه says that the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم and their descendants knew that Heaven *(Jannah)* lay above the seven skies and below the divine throne, while Hell lay beneath the seven earths.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PIOUS

"...prepared for the pious..." Heaven *(Jannah)* has been prepared for the people whose descriptions follow in the following verses.

Their first attribute is that they are *"Those who spend in ease and adversity..."* Spending in charity for Allāh's sake is an action of great merit and should be practiced in all situations. Spending thousands is, to a wealthy person, just like how spending a little would be for a poor person. A person who truly loves spending in charity will do so in all situations, be he affluent or in poverty. Such people are prepared to sacrifice their own needs for the needs of others. They are praised in Surah Hashr, where Allāh says, *"They prefer others above themselves although they are needy themselves."* [*Surah 59, Verse 9*]

Spending in the way of Allāh is not reserved for the wealthy alone, but can be done by the poor as well. Generosity is a trait that is not exclusive to the rich. The person possessing this noble attribute can spend in all situations.

"... swallow their anger..." They control their anger and do not allow themselves to vent it. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A hero is not he who floors another in combat, but he who controls himself when angry." [*Bukhari v.2 p.903*] The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is also reported to have said, "A servant cannot take a better sip in the eyes of Allāh than the sip he takes of his anger, which he controls for the pleasure of Allāh." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.434 from Ahmad*]

A narration appears in Abu Dawūd in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Undoubtedly, anger is from Satan *(Shaytān)*, who is created of fire, and definitely fire can be extinguished by water. Therefore, whoever becomes angry should make wudhu *(ablution)*."

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضی الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "When any of you becomes angry while standing, he should sit. If the anger subsides in this way, it is fine, otherwise he should lie down." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.434 from Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Allāh shall conceal the faults of the one who protects his tongue and shall save from punishment on the Day of Judgment the one who controlled his anger." [*Ibid*]

"*......and forgive people.* " This is indeed an excellent virtue and entails the pardoning of every type of injustice. It applies to forgiving someone who may have stolen, usurped a right, assaulted, backbitten, slandered, etc. There is a great reward attached to this.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reported from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that Sayyidina Mūsa علیه السلام asked Allāh who was the most honoured of all His bondsmen. Allāh replied that it was the person who forgave another despite having the ability to vent his avenge himself." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.434 from Bayhaqi*]

"*.....Allāh loves those who do good...*" This refers to those who carry out all their actions well. According to the "hadith of Sayyidina Jibr'īl علیه السلام" it refers to worshipping Allāh as if one sees Him, and if this is not possible, then He should be worshipped knowing that Allāh is watching. With regard to one's interaction with other people, it refers to dealing with them kindly and politely e.g. being lenient when collecting debts, respecting elders, being merciful to juniors, assisting the needy, the orphans, the weak, and liking for others what one likes for himself.

AN INCIDENT OF SAYYIDINA ZAINUL ĀBIDĪN رحمة الله علیه

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" records that the slave girl of Sayyidina Zainul Ābidīn رحمة الله علیه was once pouring water for him while he made ablution *(wudhu)*. The jug slipped from her hand and injured his face. When he glared at her, she recited the verse, *"those who swallow their anger.* He said that he will control his anger. Then she recited further, *"and forgive people,"* upon which he said, *"I forgive you."* She then completed the verse, *"Allāh loves those who do good."* At this he responded, "Go! I free you for the pleasure of Allāh."

THE VIRTUE OF SEEKING PARDON

"Those who, if they perpetrate an evil or oppress themselves, remember Allāh and repent for their sins." This verse praises those who having committed a sin and oppress themselves by the commission of a sin, then resort to Istighfār *(seeking forgiveness from Allāh)*. Allāh shall pardon them, on condition that "...... *they do not intentionally persist upon what they do."* This is the condition of sincere repentance, that the person makes a firm resolution not to commit the sin again.

It is not sufficient to merely repent verbally and then resort to the same actions again. Sayyidah Rabi'ah Basriyyah رحمة الله علیها mentioned, "Our Istighfār also requires Istighfār." i.e. Due to the fact that it is not done sincerely, it

contradicts the status of worshipper and we will have to ask forgiveness of Allāh for this insincerity.

"Who can pardon sins besides Allāh?" Attention is drawn to the fact that one can turn only to Allāh for pardon. This verse refutes the belief of the Christians who ask forgiveness of their priests on Sundays. They believe that certain sins are forgiven without request, while others must be whispered in the ears of the priest before forgiveness is secured. It is contrary even to logic in that although a person sins against Allāh, yet he is pardoned by a human being.

"The reward for these people shall be forgiveness from their Lord and such gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever." Thereafter, Allāh expresses the magnificence of this reward by saying, *"Excellent indeed is the reward for the workers."*

TAKING HEED FROM THE PREVIOUS NATIONS

"Numerous practices have passed before you, so travel in the earth and see what was the plight of those who belied." Many were those nations who belied the messages of their Prophets عليهم السلام, thereby incurring the punishment of Allāh. The ruins of their destroyed cities are visible to this day, to be witnessed by those who take heed.

Even if the enemy gains the upper hand, this victory is temporary and it shall soon come to pass that Allāh will destroy them, as He did to those before them. Then will His help come to the Muslims and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"This is a discourse for mankind, a guidance and a lesson for the pious." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.3 p.66*) writes that although the address is to mankind at large, it will be only the pious who shall take heed.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

(139) Do not lose courage and do not be grieved for you shall be elevated if you are indeed believers.

YOU SHALL BE ELEVATED IF YOU BE BELIEVERS

"Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.120*) reports statement of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه who said that after the Muslims were defeated at Uhud, Sayyidina Khalid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه (who had not yet accepted Islām by then) led a contingent of the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* to a mountain with the intention of launching a fresh attack from there. At that instance, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made supplication *(du'ā)* to Allāh thus, "O Allāh, let them not overcome us. O Allāh, we have no might except Yours. Oh Allāh, none worship You in this city besides this small party." On this occasion Allāh revealed the above verse, whereupon a group of Muslim archers climbed a mountain, taking the polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* cavalry as their targets. This stopped them in their tracks, causing them to turn back and flee.

إِن يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ ٱلْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُۥ ۚ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنكُمْ شُهَدَآءَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ
﴿140﴾ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَيَمْحَقَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿141﴾ أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُوا۟
ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿142﴾ وَلَقَدْ كُنتُمْ
تَمَنَّوْنَ ٱلْمَوْتَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿143﴾

(140) If you have been injured, then definitely the enemy have also been injured in the same way. These are the days that We cause to alternate between people, so that Allāh may know those who believe and make martyrs amongst you. Allāh likes not the oppressors. (141) So that Allāh may purify the believers and destroy the disbelievers. (142) Do you think that you will enter Heaven (Jannah) when Allāh has not yet learnt of those of you who wage Jihād (religion war), and those who remain steadfast? (143) Indeed you used to wish for death before it came to you. Surely now you have seen it before your own eyes.

CONSOLATION FOR THE MUSLIMS

In the first verse, Allāh consoles the Muslim by reminding them that just as they suffered a setback at Uhud and 70 of their people were martyred, at the Battle of Badr, the infidels *(kuffār)* also lost 70 of their men. Allāh does not allow situations to stagnate and rotates them so that at times one shall be victorious and at other times, others will emerge victorious. In this way, the Muslims were triumphant at Badr but the following year it was the turn of the infidels.

THE WISDOM UNDERLYING THE INCIDENT OF UHUD

Allāh mentions the reasons for the defeat at Uhud in these verses. The first was *"so that Allāh may know those who believe."* During times of adversity, the grain is separated from the chaff. On the occasion of Uhud, it was seen that the hypocrites deserted before the battle whereas the sincere Muslims did not desert the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even in the face of defeat.

It should be understood that Allāh is Aware of everything even before its actual occurrence. These incidents coming to Allāh's knowledge do not refute this accepted belief since there are two types of knowledge. One is of something before its occurrence, while the other is of the same incident after its occurrence. The verses refer to the second type i.e. the knowledge that a certain incident had taken place.

The second wisdom mentioned is that the incident transpired so that Allāh may *"make martyrs amongst you."* The rank of a martyr is lofty indeed and only the person who has sincere Imān in the Qur'ān and Ahādīth will truly appreciate it its exalted status.

The third reason mentioned is *"So that Allāh may purify the believers."* When a person endures trials and adversities, his character and deeds are purified.

The fourth reason is that Allāh wished thereby to *"destroy the disbelievers."* By being victorious, the infidels *(kuffār)* would become courageous to engage in battle against the Muslims on the next occasion, wherein they would be vanquished and destroyed.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.70*) writes that the verse here refers to all those infidels who, after Uhud, remained as disbelievers. Allāh destroyed all of them. He writes further that another interpretation of this verse is that when the infidels score a victory, Devil deceives them into remaining in their state of infidelity *(kufr)*, causing them to suffer the eternal doom of Hell.

"Do you think that you will enter Heaven (Jannah) when Allāh has not yet learnt of those of you who wage Jihād (religion war), and those who remain steadfast?" This verse means that if one desires to acquire Heaven *(Jannah)*, one need to make an effort, participate in Jihād *(religion war)* and be steadfast. Those wanting to attain Heaven *(Jannah)* will have to be prepared for these things and apply themselves fully for these tasks. Finally it is Allāh Who judges and ascertains whether people have been true.

AN ADDRESS TO THOSE WHO WISHED FOR DEATH

Indeed you used to wish for death before it came to you. Surely now you have seen it before your own eyes. " This verse is addressed to those Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم who had not participated in the battle of Badr because they had not expected the expedition to actually develop into a battle. When the entire episode had terminated and Allāh had granted victory to the Muslims, allowing some of them to drink from the bliss of martyrdom, those who remained behind were remorseful. They used to lament, saying that they wished that they were also of those who had been made Shahīd *(martyr)*.

When these people participated in Uhud, they were also disorientated by the sudden recovery of the enemy, and did not display the fortitude with which they began the battle and which was necessary to attain the mantle of martyrdom. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.71*]

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ ٱلرُّسُلُ أَفَإِيْن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ ٱنقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰٓ
أَعْقَٰبِكُمْ وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا وَسَيَجْزِى ٱللَّهُ
ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿144﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ كِتَٰبًا مُّؤَجَّلًا
وَمَن يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَن يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا
وَسَنَجْزِى ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿145﴾

(144) Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is but a messenger. Indeed many messengers have passed before him. if he dies or is martyred, would you turn back on your heels? He who turns back on his heels can never harm Allāh in the least. Allāh shall soon reward the grateful ones. (145) Every soul shall die only by the

permission of Allāh at an appointed hour. Whosoever desires the reward of this world, We shall give him thereof, and whosoever desires the reward of the Hereafter, We shall grant him thereof as well. Soon We will reward the thankful ones.

A CAUTION TO THOSE WHO EXPRESSED INTOLERANCE UPON THE DEMISE OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

When the infidels *(kuffār)* recoiled to attack the Muslims at Uhud, seventy Muslims lost their lives, including the uncle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Sayyidina Hamzah رضى الله عنه and those who remained on guard at the pass. On this occasion, a stone dislodged several of the front teeth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his noble face was also injured.

In this battle, one of the infidels *(kuffār)* attempted to assassinate the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. His attack was thwarted by the Muslim flag bearer, Sayyidina Mus'ab bin Umair رضى الله عنه who lost his life in the process. The infidel *(kāfir)*assumed that he had succeeded in killing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and began announcing this. Certain historians write that Satan *(Shaytān)* made this announcement.

Upon hearing this, the Muslims were totally taken aback and struck with confusion. Some of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* grabbed the opportunity to revert to their former religion. They even began to instigate the true Muslims to do the same.

Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced, "O bondsmen of Allāh! Gather around me!" Consequently, thirty Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم mustered around the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and defended him till the enemy were repulsed. Certain Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم displayed outstanding courage on this occasion. Sayyidina Sa'ād bin Abi Waqās رضى الله عنه fired so many arrows that part of his bow actually bent. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself was providing the arrows for him to shoot and would say, "Shoot, O Sa'ād, may my parents be sacrificed for you!"

Sayyidina Talha رضى الله عنه shielded the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with his arms and one of his arms became paralysed on account of this. The eye of Sayyidina Qatada رضى الله عنه dropped out of its socket and on to his cheek. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم placed it back into its place whereafter he could see even better than before.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called for the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم to gather around him, the first to reach was Sayyidina Ka'ab bin Malik رضى الله عنه. Upon seeing the eyes of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم still glistening beneath the helmet, he declared, "Hear the glad tidings that this is the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم!" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remained silent at this announcement, probably not to attract the attention of the infidels *(kuffār)* so that they do not launch another attack.

On hearing this announcement of Sayyidina Ka'ab bin Mālik رضى الله عنه, the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم began collecting around the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, who remanded them for deserting. They said, "O Prophet of Allāh صلى الله

عليه وسلم, when we heard the rumour that you had been martyred, a fear gripped our hearts and we began to flee." On this occasion the above verse was revealed, *"Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is but a messenger. Indeed many messengers have passed before him. If he dies or is martyred, would you turn back on your heels? He who turns back on his heels can never harm Allāh in the least. Allāh shall soon reward the grateful ones."*

When the declaration was made that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had been martyred, Sayyidina Anas bin Nadhr رضى الله عنه asked the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, "Why are you all sitting here?" They replied that since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was no more, they could do nothing. He told them, "What shall we live for after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم? Stand up and die for the Dīn *(religion)* that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم died for!" Saying this, he flung himself into the enemy lines and fought till he was martyred.

Sayyidina Thābit bin Dahda رضى الله عنه also addressed the Sahāba in a similar way saying, "If Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is martyred, know that Allāh is Alive and shall never die. So fight for your Dīn *(religion)* and Allāh shall purify you and assist you." Upon his bidding, a group of the Ansār rose to fight and he could not be subdued till Sayyidina Khalid bin Walid رضى الله عنه killed him with a spear.

Another incident is that of a emigrant *(Muhājir)* who passed by an Ansari lying in a pool of blood. He asked the Ansari whether he knew that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was martyred. The Ansari replied, "If he is martyred then he has indeed fulfilled his duty of Prophethood, (our work is still incomplete) so go and fight for your Dīn *(religion)*!"

The episode of Sayyidina Sa'ad bin Rabī رضى الله عنه is similar. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Zaid bin Thābit رضى الله عنه to search for him, instructing him to pass his salāms on to him should he find him alive. When Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه found Sayyidina Sa'ad رضى الله عنه, the latter was fatally wounded with 70 wounds on his body, and he had only a few last breaths to take. Sayyidina Zaid رضى الله عنه passed on to him the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, asking him how he was. Sayyidina Sa'ad رضى الله عنه replied, "Salāms to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and to you. Tell the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that I smell the sweet fragrance of Heaven *(Jannah)*, and tell my Ansār brethren that if the enemy has to gain access to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم before any of their eyes (i.e. while any of them are still alive), then they shall have no excuse to offer before Allāh." With these words, he breathed his last.

When the rumour of the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم diminished the spirit of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, Sayyidina Abu Sufyān (who was then the leader of the infidels *(kuffār)* mounted a mountain and exclaimed, "May Hubl be elevated!" (Hubl was one of their gods). Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, should we not reply?" When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied in the affirmative, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه remarked in a loud voice, "Allāh is more elevated and greater!"

To this Abu Sufyān replied, "We have Uzza whereas you have no Uzza!" (Uzza was also one of their gods). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه to say, "Allāh is our helper and you have no helper!" When he

said this, Abu Sufyān proclaimed, "Where is so and so?" (referring to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Abu Bakr and Umar رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه responded, "Here is the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Abu Bakr and I am here too."

Sayyidina Abu Sufyān رضى الله عنه said, "Today is in lieu of Badr. At times some people are victorious and at times the fighting is equal." Upon this, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه replied, "It is not the same. Our deceased ones are in Heaven *(Jannah)* and your deceased are in the fire." Abu Sufyān said, "If this is your belief then we are destroyed!"

At this time, there were 12 people with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. (The others came later on). The others had either left for Madinah, or mounted the mountain nearby. Of those with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were Sayyidina Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali, Talha, Zubair, Hārith bin Simmah رضى الله عنهم and others. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proceeded with them to the valley where the fight originally began.

Upon reaching the valley, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reclined against the rocks. On seeing him, the Polytheist *(Mushrik)* Ubayy bin Khalaf exclaimed that he was going to slay the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This he used to say from the time he was in Makkah, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him self that he would be the one to kill Ubayy. On this occasion, he was armed to the teeth. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him, he flung a spear at him, which caused him to fall from his horse. Although the injury appeared to be insignificant, he bellowed like a bull. His companions carried him away and rebuked him for screaming in that manner over such a small injury.

He told them that he was going to die since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had mentioned in Makkah that he would kill him. He told them that he was experiencing such pain that, if it had to be distributed amongst all the people of Hijāz, they would all die. He died en route to Makkah at a place called Rābigh. [*Bukhari, "Rūhul Ma'āni", and Ibn Kathīr* رحمة الله عليه]

In all the battles fought in Islām, Ubayy bin Khalaf was the only one to be killed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The people who will be most severely punished on the Day of Judgment is that person who killed a Prophet, was killed by a Prophet, or killed any of his parents. Those who make pictures will also be amongst these, as well as that scholar who did not benefit from his knowledge." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.3 87*]

In the above verse, Allāh mentions that although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a Prophet, it could not be said that he will not pass away. It is the exclusive quality of the Creator of the worlds, Allāh, that He shall live forever. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a caller to Allāh and not Allāh himself. His duty was to invite others to the worship of Allāh and invoke them to abstain from polytheism *(shirk)*. Should he pass away naturally or be slain, none should turn back to their former religions. The Dīn *(religion)* is from Allāh, Who is Forever and should Be worshipped till eternity.

THE SERMON OF SAYYIDINA ABU BAKR رضى الله عنه

On the occasion of Uhud, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was neither slain nor did he pass away. However, when he did pass away, the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم were stunned and very much bereaved. Despite being a brave and sensible person, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه swore that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not die and merely went to meet Allāh as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had gone for forty days and then returned. In the same way, he said, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also went to meet Allāh and will soon return to cut off the hands and feet of those who claim that he died.

While he was addressing the people in this manner, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه came and, after silencing Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and praising Allāh, he addressed the people saying, "All those who worshipped Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم should know that he has passed away. Those who worship Allāh should know that He is Forever, shall live Forever and will never die." He then recited the verse *'Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *is but a messenger. Indeed many messengers..."*

At this time, this verse had not even occurred to the other Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, and it was as if they had never known about it. When they heard the verse, they were finally convinced of the demise. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه said that it was only when he heard the verse that he became convinced of the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*Al Bidāya wan Nihāya*]

Allāh declares in the verse *"He who turns back on his heels can never harm Allāh in the least."* Those who choose to revert to their former religions cannot harm Allāh. When a person accepts the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām, he should never think that his worship will benefit Allāh and that he can harm Allāh by refraining from His worship. Allāh is totally Independent and none can harm, nor benefit Him. Allāh shall reward the person who worships Him and accepts His divinity. In so doing the person benefits himself only.

".......the grateful ones..." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that this refers to those who remain steadfast upon the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām. This will only happen once a person is convinced of the truth of the Dīn *(religion)*. Remaining upon the Dīn *(religion)* is a sign of gratefulness, while turning away from it is a sign of ingratitude.

"Every soul shall die only by the permission of Allāh at an appointed hour." None can die before his appointed hour, neither can the hour be postponed in the least. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.74*) writes that this verse encourages Jihād *(religion war)* and rebukes those who avoid Jihād *(religion war)* because of the fear of death.

He writes further that the verse could also be a form of consolation to the Muslims, telling them that the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was inevitable, as is the case with every other mortal.

"Whosoever desires the reward of this world, We shall give him thereof.." For example the person who fights in Jihād *(religion war)* to earn the booty shall get it (if Allāh desires, as is stipulated in Surah Bani Isrā'īl). In a like manner, *"whosoever desires the reward of the Hereafter, We shall grant him thereof as well. Soon*

We will reward the thankful ones." This verse alludes to those archers who in the haste of gathering the booty, forgot the instruction of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. It also praises those who remained loyal with him during those trying times.

A REMINDER TO CONTEMPORARY ORATORS AND JOURNALISTS

There is great wisdom in every action of Allāh, as well as tremendous lessons for mankind till the Day of Judgment. This also applies to the false rumours about the demise of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and Allāh's reproach of those who used this opportunity to turn away from the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām. These lessons teach man that the Dīn *(religion)* belongs to Allāh and worship is reserved for Him only since He has been Forever and shall remain so till eternity.

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ used the same verse to silence and, at the same time, console the Muslims upon the demise of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. In this, there is a great lesson for every man to come that although it is natural to grieve when some renowned personality dies, every Muslim should bear in mind that this is inevitable. Whoever the person may have been, a Mufti, a mentor, a Muhaddith, etc. it is of no use to shed tears and then to sit idle in bereavement. Those who succeed them should adopt the cause for which these noble souls lived their lives and aid to revive the Dīn *(religion)* that they sought to uplift.

It is common that foolish statements are made when such people pass away. People lamentingly say, "What shall happen now? Our Prophet has left us as!" Saying this, they neither continue the practices of their saints nor do they propagate his message. They should ponder over their statements when they say "What will happen now?" How was the Dīn *(religion)* passed on through the centuries before them? Did not the predecessors of these very saints pass on before them? They never chose to perpetuate their grief and pass their lives in bereavement as people do nowadays.

The Dīn *(religion)* belongs to Allāh. People will come and go, but He is Everlasting. The media and leaders of various fraternities organise functions in commemoration of deceased personalities wherein certain orators laude such praises that are tantamount to infidelity *(kufr)*. Some exclaim (Allāh forbid!) that the blood-stained claws of fate have snatched the person away from us at a time when we needed him the most! Others write, "Where will another like him be born?" There are also those who say, "Hadhrat has left us as orphans, without support." (This they say as if his death preceded its appointed hour and occurred without the permission of Allāh). May Allāh protect us from such perverse statements! Āmīn.

The verse responds to such remarks impressing upon one to be content with the decree of Allāh and to continue carrying out good deeds. The Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh shall remain flourishing in the world for as long as Allāh wills, and this is not dependent on any Sheikh, Muhaddith, Pīr or Mufti. The incident at Uhud also refutes the annual commemoration of the demise of Sayyidina Hussain رضی اللہ عنہ. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم lived for seven years after the battle of

Uhud, yet he never commemorated the martyrdom of his uncle, Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه. Mourning and shedding crocodile tears are not becoming of a vibrant, living nation.

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن نَّبِيٍّ قَٰتَلَ مَعَهُۥ رِبِّيُّونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا۟ لِمَآ أَصَابَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا
ضَعُفُوا۟ وَمَا ٱسْتَكَانُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ (146) وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلَهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا
ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِىٓ أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
(147) فَـَٔاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ثَوَابَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (148)

(146) Numerous were the Prophets with whom many devoted men fought. They never lost courage with all the hardships that afflicted them in the path of Allāh, neither did they weaken, nor become helpless. Allāh loves the patient ones. (147) Their only cry was that they would say, "O our Lord, forgive us our sins and transgressions in our affairs, keep our feet firm and help us against the disbelieving nation. (148) So Allāh granted them the reward of the world and an excellent reward in the Hereafter. Allāh loves those who do good.

THE SACRIFICE AND PRAYERS OF THOSE DEVOTED TO THE PREVIOUS PROPHETS عليهم السلام

From the very distant past, the battle has raged between Belief *(Imān)* and infidelity. This stemmed from the time that the infidels reared their ugly head from the children of the father of man, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. The companions of all the Prophets عليهم السلام made tremendous sacrifices in the battles against the infidels *(kuffār)* and many of their lives were lost. The above verse applauds their excellent conduct in this regard, praising the fact that they never lost courage, nor did they display any weakness or helplessness in the face of the enemy. They remained resolute and fought with great determination, constantly praying to Allāh, *"O our Lord, forgive us our sins and transgressions in our affairs, keep our feet firm and help us against the disbelieving nation.*

As a result, "So Allāh granted them the reward of the world (in the form of victory over their enemies) and an excellent reward in the Hereafter (by way of His pleasure and Heaven *(Jannah)*)."

All this is a lesson for the Ummah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم We should also remain devoted to our Prophet, fighting by his side in the face of all kinds of tribulations. Difficulties must be anticipated as these will always present themselves to the devoted ones, as they did to those in the past as well. The infidels *(kuffār)* will continue to exert themselves against the believers, battles will be fought on an ongoing basis, and many believers will lose their lives. Despite all of this, the believers must maintain control, must persevere and show no weakness.

The prayer of those in the past teaches us that it is necessary to seek

forgiveness even while doing good deeds. This is so because no person can do an action truly worthy of Allāh's acceptance and no action is devoid of deficiencies. By seeking pardon while carrying out an action, a person's past sins are forgiven and, at the same time, any deficiency in the present action is compensated for.

It may also happen that one omits a good action when involved in the commission of another. This amounts to a form of transgression of the limits, which shall also be forgiven when seeking repentance.

The supplication for assistance against the enemy draws attention to the fact that victory does not depend upon a large army or superiority in weaponry. All is from Allāh, therefore attention should never be diverted from Him.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تُطِيعُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَٰبِكُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿149﴾ بَلِ ٱللَّهُ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلنَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿150﴾ سَنُلْقِى فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلرُّعْبَ بِمَآ أَشْرَكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا ۖ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿151﴾

(149) O you who believe, if you obey those who disbelieve, they shall turn you back on your heels, rendering you losers. (150) Nevertheless, Allāh is your Protecting Friend and He is the best of helpers. (151) We shall soon cast terror into the hearts of the disbelievers because they ascribe partners to Allāh, for which no warrant has been revealed. Their abode is the fire, and it is indeed an evil abode for the oppressors.

DO NOT OBEY THE DISBELIEVERS!

The first of the above three verses warns against following the dictates of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Thereafter it mentions that the result of such foolishness is that they will revert the Muslim back to his former religion of disbelief *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*. Should this occur, the Muslim will be the loser both in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

"Nevertheless, Allāh is your Protecting Friend and He is the best of helpers." Therefore, only Allāh should be worshipped and assistance should be sought only from Him. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.4 p.87*) writes that *"those who disbelieve"* refers to the Munāfiqīn *(hypocrites)*. Narrating from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, he says that when the Muslims were defeated at Uhud, these hypocrites told the Muslims to revert back to the religion of the Makkans.

Other commentators maintain that the verse refers to Abu Sufyān and the other disbelievers *(kuffār)* who fought in Uhud. According to this interpretation, the verse means that the Muslim should not show any weakness, nor accept a truce with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. (When the Muslims were suffering a defeat at Uhud, some of them expressed the opinion that they drop their arms and opt for a truce with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*).

The Jews and Christians may also be referred to in the verse, meaning that the Muslims should not accept their consultation in any matter; This is the opinion of Sayyidina Ibn Juraij رحمة الله عليه. The message of the Qur'ān is general and applicable to all the disbelievers *(kuffār)* till the Day of Judgment. The Muslims should never obey them, never consider them as allies and never bow before them.

We shall soon cast terror into the hearts of the disbelievers..." It is recorded in "Rūhul Ma'āni" that when Abu Sufyān and the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were marching back to Makkah, they regretted not finishing off all the Muslims. It occurred to them that they should return to complete the task but Allāh cast terror into their hearts and they opted not to do so. However, they sent a Bedouin to Madinah, to sound the false warning that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were preparing to launch a new attack. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispatched a detachment of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم to a place called H'amra -ul Asad. They, however, encountered no resistance.

In this verse, Allāh then mentions the reason for the awe and terror that He placed in their hearts. Allāh says that it was *"because they ascribe partners to Allāh, for which no warrant has been revealed."* By Allāh casting terror into their hearts in this world, the Muslims were safeguarded, and in the Hereafter for the disbelievers *(kuffār)* *"Their abode is the fire, and it is indeed an evil abode for the oppressors."*

It is gathered from this verse that polytheism *(shirk)* is the actual cause of terror being struck in the heart. This fact has been witnessed when the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم marched to Persia, where they were met by a large force of the fire-worshippers. When the fighting commenced in all earnestness, the Persians became totally disorientated and fled the battlefield. The same occurred in the Crusades, as well as the battles with the Hindus of India. They were all petrified by the awe that Allāh instilled into their hearts and they deserted the battlefields, leaving the Muslim to fly the flag of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* over their lands. The psyche of disbelief *(kufr)* is to be terrified and that of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* is to be brave and courageous.

THE TRUE DĪN *(RELIGION)* IS THAT WHICH ALLĀH REVEALED

".......because they ascribe partners to Allāh for which no warrant has been revealed. " This verse tells us that the only correct way to live is the way which Allāh has revealed to man. The human has the instinctive knowledge that he is the creation of Allāh and that there is no deity besides Him. However, those who have not attached themselves to the Prophet عليه السلام, have mingled the worship of Allāh with that of other beings. Many of these people have concocted beliefs about Allāh that are totally deviant.

None of the religions other than Islām can conclusively prove that their beliefs, practices and acts of devotion are from Allāh. These things were introduced by the founders of these religions or by their adherents thereafter. To adopt any belief or action as a lifetime practice and to consider it a means of salvation is sheer foolishness when it is not proven to be from Allāh Himself.

The followers of other religions should be asked what proof they have to

say that their beliefs and practices are from Allāh? The Christians have no proof that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام entreated them to believe that he was the son of Allāh. They are also incapable of proving that he told them he will be killed and that only those people shall attain salvation who believes in these things. None of these beliefs were propounded by Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام but they were fabricated long after him.

The followers of every religion should ponder about what proof they have to claim that their religion is from Allāh and that they were instructed by Him to follow their religion. The Qur'ān makes it clear that the only beliefs and acts of worship that are legitimate are those conclusively revealed by Allāh. All are aware of the fact that the only religion able to claim a link with Allāh is Islām. Therefore, it is only wise and appropriate that all others not in Islām should follow the religion ordained by the Creator Himself, thereby assuring themselves of eternal success.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥٓ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُم بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ
وَتَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَرَىٰكُم مَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ مِنكُم
مَّن يُرِيدُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۚ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ
لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿152﴾ ۞ إِذْ
تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُۥنَ عَلَىٰٓ أَحَدٍ وَٱلرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِىٓ
أُخْرَىٰكُمْ فَأَثَٰبَكُمْ غَمًّۢا بِغَمٍّ لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا
مَآ أَصَٰبَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿153﴾ ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلْغَمِّ
أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَآئِفَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِٱللَّهِ
غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ ظَنَّ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ۖ يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُۥ
لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ مَّا
قُتِلْنَا هَٰهُنَا ۗ قُل لَّوْ كُنتُمْ فِى بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۖ
وَلِيَبْتَلِىَ ٱللَّهُ مَا فِى صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ
ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿154﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا ٱسْتَزَلَّهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿155﴾

(152) Most assuredly Allāh made good His promise to you when you slayed them with His permission. Until (the time came when) you lost courage,

disputed with regard to the order and disobeyed after you were shown what you liked. Some of you sought the world while some of you sought the Hereafter. Then Allāh deflected you from them to test you. Undoubtedly He has pardoned you and verily Allāh is Most Kind to the believers. (153) When you were fleeing, not turning towards anyone and the messenger called to you from behind. Then Allāh compensated you with grief for your grief so that you may not be despondent over that which you missed nor that which afflicted you. Allāh Knows well what you do. (154) Then Allāh descended serenity upon you after the grief in the form of slumber that overcame a party of you while another party, concerned with themselves, thought of Allāh what was untrue, a thought of ignorance. They said, "Do we have any say in the matter?" Tell them, "Every matter rests with Allāh!" They hide in their souls what they do not disclose to you. They say, "If we had any say in the matter we would not be killed here!" Tell them, "Even if you were in your homes, those who were destined to be killed would have emerged towards their places of death." (All this took place) So that Allāh may test what is within your breasts and purify that which is within your hearts. Allāh knows what is within the hearts. (155) Those of you who fled on the day when the two masses clashed, were caused to falter by Satan (Shaytān) due to some of the actions that they perpetrated. Without doubt Allāh has pardoned them. Surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Clement.

THE CAUSE FOR THE DEFEAT AT UHUD

These verses shed light on the causes for the temporary defeat of the Muslims at Uhud. Mention is also made of their initial victory and the tranquility that overcame them after their grief.

At the outset of the battle, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم posted the band of archers at the mountain pass. Their instructions were explicit that they were not to move irrespective of the conditions. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that as long as they remained rooted to their positions, victory was assured for the Muslims. This was a promise from Allāh, and while they remained at their stations, the Muslims gained the upper hand. Even the polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* women, including Hinda bint Utba, began to flee in such desperation that they left behind all their belongings.

When the band of archers saw this victory (which is, according to the verse, *"what they liked")* they disputed with regard to the order of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is referred to in the verse as ..... *disputed with regard to the order."* Thereafter, most of them abandoned their posts in pursuit of the booty, as Allāh says that they *"disobeyed after you were shown what you liked. Some of you sought the world while some of you sought the Hereafter."*

When the polytheists *(mushrikīn)* saw the unguarded pass, they made a break towards it and attacked the Muslims from behind. The Muslims reeled before this onslaught, lost courage, and could not offer any resistance. This is referred to in the phase, *"Then Allāh deflected you from them to test you."* However, Allāh then declares His forgiveness for them when He says, *"Undoubtedly He has pardoned you and verily Allāh is Most Kind to the believers."*

When the Muslim army was scattered in the counter attack, The Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned them to regroup calling out, "Oh bondsmen of Allāh! Gather around me!" This call was answered by only a few Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم while the others were oblivious to the call. Allāh refers to this by saying that the grief of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was replaced by the grief of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم when they were also afflicted by adversity. Allāh says, *"When you were fleeing, not turning towards anyone and the messenger called to you from behind. Then Allāh compensated you with grief for your grief.."*

Another interpretation of the above verse is that the first grief was that of suffering a reverse in the battle, while the second was the rumour of the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. One may refer to "Rūhul Ma'āni" for some other interpretations of this verse.

"........so that you may not be despondent over that which you missed nor that which afflicted you." Here the wisdom of the grief is explained. It overcame them to make them determined so that if another similar situation arose, they will be able to meet it with fortitude. Every difficulty becomes easy once perseverance is inculcated, and Allāh gives support to such people.

PACIFYING THE GRIEF OF THE COMPANIONS *(SAHĀBA)* رضى الله عنهم

When the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم suffered the overwhelming grief of injury and defeat, Allāh pacified and subdued them by enveloping them in a slumber. This was so pronounced that they did not even pay heed to their grief thereafter. Similarly, when no relief or cure can be offered to an ailing person, a doctor often administers a sedative that will put the patient off to sleep. In this way he is made to forget about his condition, granting him respite. Allāh says in his regard, *"Then Allāh descended serenity upon you after the grief in the form of slumber that overcame a party of you..."*

The above occurred to the Muslims. On the other hand, the situation with the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* was different. Allāh says with regard to them, *"while another party, concerned with themselves, thought of Allāh what was untrue, a thought of ignorance."* These people had no feelings for the Dīn *(religion)* or for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. *"They said, 'Do we have any say in the matter?'* They would say that if our opinion was accepted, we would not have emerged from Madinah to be killed here at Uhud.

The verse replies to them, *"Tell them, 'Every matter rests with Allāh!"* Allāh says further *"Tell them, 'Even if you were in your homes, those who were destined to be killed would have emerged towards their places of death."*

"So that Allāh may test what is within your breasts and purify that which is within your hearts. Allāh knows what is within the hearts." This verse implies that whatever has transpired "as so that Allāh may test the inner condition of those involved. It is during trying times like these that the true nature of a person becomes apparent. Consequently, the hypocrisy of the hypocrites *(munāfiqīn)* was exposed just as the Belief *(Imān)* of the Muslims was fortified and strengthened.

Allāh has knowledge of everything before it can actually take place.

However, verses such as the above refer to the knowledge of an event that has transpired. It also refers to the knowledge that is soon to come to the attention of the people.

THE DECLARATION OF THE COMPANIONS *(SAHĀBA)* رضى الله عنهم BEING FORGIVEN

"Those of you who fled on the day when the two masses clashed, were caused to falter by Devil (Shaytān) due to some of the actions that they perpetrated. Without doubt Allāh has pardoned them. Surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Clement." This verse offers comfort to the Muslims by announcing Allāh's pardon. It also states that the momentary retreat of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم was caused by Devil *(Shaytān)*, and that this was a result of other misdeeds. This teaches us that the committing of sins leads to more sins being committed. When Devil *(Shaytān)* instigates a person to commit a sin, it encourages him to continue doing the same.

[The above details about the battle of Uhud has been extracted from the tafsīr of Allāma Ibn Kath'īr رحمة الله عليه and the books "Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" and "Rūhul Ma'āni"]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَقَالُواْ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُواْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَوْ كَانُواْ غُزًّى لَّوْ كَانُواْ عِندَنَا مَا مَاتُواْ وَمَا قُتِلُواْ لِيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
وَٱللَّهُ يُحْيِۦ وَيُمِيتُ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿156﴾ وَلَئِن قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ
مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿157﴾ وَلَئِن مُّتُّمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَإِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿158﴾

(156) O you who believe, do not be like those who disbelieve and say to their brothers, when they travel in the land or are fighting soldiers, "If they were with us, they would neither have died nor been killed!" So that Allāh may make this an anguish in their hearts. Allāh gives life and death, and Allāh sees all that you do." (157) Should you be martyred in the path of Allāh or die, then verily the forgiveness from Allāh and His mercy are better than all that they amass. (158) If you die or are martyred then unto Allāh shall you be gathered.

DO NOT BE LIKE THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* WHO DETEST FIGHTING IN JIHĀD *(RELIGION WAR)*

Some people are in the habit of not doing any good deeds, nor allowing others to do the same. When someone does carry out good actions they scorn and scoff him. In addition, they consider any good done to them as being detrimental.

Those who are drowned in the love of this world detest that others should sacrifice their lives and wealth in pursuit of the Hereafter. This was the condition

of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. They would say about their brothers (in lineage and superficially in religion) that if they had not gone out on journey or in Jihād *(religion war)*, they would still be alive. This statement appears to be due to compassion, but compassion should never present an obstacle to prevent people from carrying out good deeds. Allāh instructs the Muslims not to be like these people who say such things.

Allāh then draws our attention to the fact that the granting of life and death is the exclusive right of Allāh. Wherever a person may be, he can never escape the decree of Allāh.

"Should you be martyred in the path of Allāh or die, then verily the forgiveness from Allāh and His mercy are better than all that they amass." Those who are greedy for the world, think only of the world and desire the same for others, saying, *"If they were with us, they would neither have died nor been killed!"* They believed that if these people had lived longer,, they would have been able to amass more wealth. Allāh states emphatically that this wealth is of no value when compared to the forgiveness and mercy of Allāh, which the martyrs shall receive.

"If you die or are martyred, then unto Allāh shall you be gathered." If this shall be the destination of every person, why should one not die in His way?

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ (159)

(159) It is due to the mercy of Allāh that you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] are lenient with them. If you had been ill-tempered and hard-hearted, they would have all dispersed from around you. So pardon them, seek forgiveness for them and consult with them in matters. When you have taken a decision, then place your trust in Allāh. Verily Allāh loves those who place their trust in Him.

THE NOBLE CHARACTER OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never adopted a harsh attitude towards the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم when they caused him much grief on the occasion of Uhud by fleeing from the battlefield. He never rebuked nor reproached them for their misdemeanour. Allāh lauds this kind and gentle personality of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the above verse. The verse also serves to console and comfort the Muslims.

While previous verses have already declared Allāh's forgiveness for the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, this verse instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to also pardon them. In addition, the verse also commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to seek forgiveness from Allāh on their behalf. Thereafter, Allāh further lends succour to them by telling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"consult with them in matters. When you have taken a decision, then place your trust in Allāh.*

Verily Allāh loves those who place their trust in Him."

THE HIGH STATUS OF A PLEASANT DISPOSITION

While the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always possessed a pleasant and accommodating nature, it became especially conspicuous on the occasion of Uhud.

The "Mu'atta" of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have been sent to perfect noble character." Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Undoubtedly the weightiest thing to be placed upon the scale of a Believer *(Mu'minīn)* on the Day of Judgment shall be noble character. Certainly Allāh detests the person who is obscene and vulgar."

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "By virtue of good character, a Believer *(Mu'minīn)* undoubtedly attains the rank of the one who stands in prayer every night and fasts every day."

Leniency and a soft-hearted nature constitute good character. Muslim records a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person deprived of gentleness is deprived of all good." In another narration he said, "Gentleness serves to beautify a thing, and anything from which it is removed becomes defective."

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Should I not inform you of a thing that is forbidden for the fire of Hell and upon which the fire of Hell is forbidden? It is that quality of that person with whom mixing is easy, he is gentle-hearted, dear and lenient."

It is recorded in Abu Dawūd that the Prophet the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "The harsh and ill mannered person shall never enter Heaven *(Jannah)*." [*All these Ahādīth are reported in "Mishkātul Masābīh"*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is the chief of all those possessing good character, therefore he was most lenient and compassionate. He bore all difficulties with tolerance and gentleness.

"If you had been ill-tempered and hard-hearted, they would have all dispersed from around you." In this verse, Allāh makes it clear that one of the binding factors that kept the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم attached to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the quality of gentleness and leniency. This caused them to love him to the limits and beyond, being prepared even to sacrifice their lives for him. If (Allāh forbid!) he were not so, they would not have hesitated to desert him.

TEACHERS AND MENTORS SHOULD ADOPT A PLEASANT DISPOSITION

It is instinctive within man that he is attracted to a person who is tolerant, friendly, unassuming and polite. People enjoy associating with such individuals, as well as learning and benefiting from them. This verse teaches a golden lesson especially to all those people who are involved in propagating the Dīn *(religion)* brought by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. These people who include teachers, preachers, Muhaddithīn, Muftis, mentors and Islāmic missionaries should be

particular about emulating the exemplary conduct of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. If they wish to serve the Ummah, they should be kind, warm, loving and gentle. If they adopt an attitude of intolerance and harshness, people will avoid them and remain aloof even though the person may be extremely learned.

Although every Muslim should be adorned with these praiseworthy qualities, they are especially necessary for the above persons. Perfection entails associating comfortably with all and sundry, carrying out good actions, teaching what is good and happily bearing hardships and difficulties. Isolating oneself so that no harm befalls one is not as praiseworthy as being of benefit to others and bearing difficulties in the process.

Tirmidhi records a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Muslim who associates with people and tolerates hardships is better than the one who does not associate with them and cannot endure the difficulties they give him." [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 432*]

THE INSTRUCTION TO CONSULT

"...consult with them in matters." Even before the revelation of this verse, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to consult with the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم and continued to do so afterwards as well. The instruction in this verse indicates the status and position of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم and is also a means of consolation for them. The instruction to consult (called "*Mashwara*" in Arabic) does not apply to situations concerning which the instruction of Allāh is clear. Only those decisions that were left to be decided by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are referred to here.

THE NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE OF CONSULTATION

When even the messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم was not exempt from resorting to "Mashwara" (*consultation*), none to come after him can deem himself exempt from the same. Every leader and person of authority must consult in public matters.

There is tremendous benefit in consultation *(Mashwara)*. People of intelligence and understanding should be consulted even though they may be junior in age and rank. The reason for this is that various opinions are desired in consultation *(Mashwara)*; making a suitable decision then becomes easy. It frequently occurs that certain factors are overlooked by senior people and are noticed only by the younger ones. When all factors and angles are viewed, insight into a situation is gained, resulting in a suitable decision being reached.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who makes Istikhāra (a prayer for Allāh' s guidance in a particular matter) shall never fail and the one who makes consultation *(Mashwara)* shall never regret." [*Bayhaqi in "Majma'ul Fawa'id" v.2 p.280*]

Consultation *(Mashwara)* should also be made in domestic affairs as well as in corporate matters. It is incumbent upon the person being consulted that he offers an opinion that he considers correct. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person being consulted is trusted" [*Tirmidhi*]. A person seeking advice on a personal matter should be given such directives that are suitable.

Abu Dawūd رحمة الله عليه records a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever directs a person towards something, knowing that, it would be better to act on another thing, then he has definitely breached his trust."

In this regard, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه has mentioned a blanket rule which has been recorded by Allāma Sakhawi رحمة الله عليه in the book "Al Maqasidul Hasanah" (*p.383*). He says, "When consulted about a matter, a person should offer that advice which he would do himself (if he were placed in the same situation)." This is in conformance with the hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم described the best Belief *(Imān)*. He said, "That you like for others as you like for yourself and you dislike for them what you dislike for yourself." *["Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 16]*

THE SHAR'I *(ISLĀMIC LAWS)* PERSPECTIVE OF MASHWARA *(CONSULTATION)*

After instructing consultation *(Mashwara)*, Allāh says, *"When you have taken a decision, then place your trust in Allāh. Verily Allāh loves those who place their trust in Him."* This verse explains that once the consultation *(Mashwara)* has been concluded and a decision has been reached, complete trust and reliance should be placed in Allāh before acting upon the decision.

This verse clarifies that it was not necessary for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to abide by the specific opinion of any one person or by that of all. Whatever he chose to do at the end could be practiced. No adviser should feel sad when his opinion is not practiced because consultation *(Mashwara)* is never in vain. Each person Who applied his thoughts and presented an opinion shall receive the reward for it. After the process of consultation, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was free to act on any of the opinions (including his own).

Reliance upon Allāh is emphasised in this verse since a Believer *(Mu'min)* never relies upon the opinions and plans of people. These are merely means to an end and cannot guarantee the best results.

The practice of consultation *(Mashwara)*continued even after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and is in vogue till this day. It should be understood that the person consulting, be he the Leader of Believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* or the father in a family, is not obliged to accept the opinion of any one person or that of all. Despite requesting the opinions of others, he may still decide to act on his personal inclination without reservation.

If the person consulting and those being consulted are sincere and desirous of Allāh's pleasure, then there shall be no ill feelings between them. None shall then be disappointed that his opinion was not taken, nor will they feel that the Leader of Believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* is a dictator who ignores the feelings of others. All these conflicts will arise when the leader and the subjects lack sincerity and mutual trust in each other.

If a leader was elected according to the Shari'ah and he is a person of piety, is relied upon by the people as being a man of knowledge and sound practice and is not a glory seeker, then there will be no objection to his acting upon his personal opinion.

PRESENT DAY DEMOCRACY

Throughout history, the system of kingship and monarchies have controlled countries. Some kings were oppressive, while others were just and kind. However, history bears testimony to the fact that the majority of these empires were oppressive. Having grown weary of these state of affairs, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* have introduced the system of democracy.

Everyone comprehends the general modus operandi of this form of government. The basic nature of this system is that it is no more than the instatement of a few individuals of a party to lead the state, thereby beguiling the masses that the public is ruling. Democracy entails the acceptance of the majority vote to elect a leader, irrespective of his piety and qualifications. It is not even necessary that he be a Muslim.

Even an illiterate ignoramus can stand for election, hoping to be elected. The parties are of all types and some are even antagonistic Islām, saying that the Islāmic system of corporal punishment is barbaric.

The voters are also largely people who do not understand the requirements of Islām. They simply cast their votes on the strength of the popularity of the party, its leader or financial resources. It is for this reason that irreligious, heretical and illiterate people are seated in parliament.

The person winning the most votes is victorious. In this case, if eleven candidates contest a seat and ten of them receive 15 votes each, the eleventh receiving 16, will be considered to be victorious. It will then be said that he won by the majority whereas in actual fact the majority was opposed to him, since he did not receive the votes of the 150 who voted for his opponents. This is the folly of democracy where consideration is given to the opinion of 16 individuals in opposition to 150 others!

Thereafter the party which has the majority is allowed to rule, allowing the entire country to be governed by a few individuals. Any member of the party who disagrees with any of the party's policies can say nothing to support his opinion and has to toe the line of the party, saying only that which is in the ruling party's favour.

The question of expenses then arises. The government now has to pay for the accommodation, vehicles, drivers, chefs, servants and other needless extravagances of the president and all his ministers. Because a person is a member of the ruling party, various portfolios are unnecessarily given to him; even though he lacks the qualifications. The tragedy of the situation is that the cost of these needless appointments and expenses are borne by the public.

Then there are the expenses of the premiers, governors and deputies of the various provinces and districts. When these are added to the above, the coffers of the country are drained.

In addition to all of this, the country is steeped in usurious debts and the public are burdened with income tax, P.A.Y.E. and custom duties. In spite of these crippling burdens, citizens of democratic countries are duped into believing that the country is theirs.

On the other hand, we have the Islāmic form of government where the state is governed by a single the Leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* who is simple in his habits and lifestyle. He is not paid an exorbitant salary and there are only single governors appointed to administrate over the various provinces. They are also men of humble behaviour, residing in simple homes and earning salaries that are adequate instead of extravagant. It is indeed tragic that people still prefer the misleading democratic system to this superior system. *"Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'ūn"*.

It is sometimes said that Islām supports the democratic system in that it advocates the practice of consultation (*Shura Mashwara*). This statement would be correct if the system is applied as described above. Islām does not approve of the system of elections where every person is allowed to vote irrespective of his status, and then the leader is chosen by way of the majority vote.

Many people of learning are also under the misconception that the democratic system should be adopted instead of the Islāmic system. They say that the democratic governments were founded with much effort and should therefore not be challenged. Such foolish things are said despite the fact that the system of democracy is fraught with defects, forcing people to accept the rule of such leaders who are totally irreligious just because the "majority" are in favour of him.

People are beguiled into believing that sovereignty should be in the hands of the public when, in reality, this is the right of Allāh. The masses are subject to His divine laws and have no right to contest the laws of Allāh.

THE NOMINATION OF THE FOUR RIGHTEOUS CALIPHS *(THE KHULAFA RĀSHIDĪN)*

It is common knowledge that the Righteous Caliphs *"Khulafa-e-Rāshidīn"* were Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه. Any person possessing some understanding of history is aware of the fact that these four Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم were not placed in their respective posts by the vote of the "majority" or by public opinion.

After the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the emigrants *(Muhajirīn)* and the Ansār convened in the hall of the Bani Sā'idah where the nomination of a leader was deliberated. Certain members of the Ansār believed that one leader be chosen from the emigrants *(Muhajirīn)* and another from the Ansār. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه told Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه to extend his hand so that he may pledge allegiance to him. When Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه complied, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, followed by the emigrants *(Muhajirīn)* and then all of the Ansār pledged their allegiance to him, thereby nominating him as their leader. He thus became the first Caliph *(Khalifa)*. The details of this incident is recorded in the book "Al Bidāya wan Nihāya" (*v.5 p.246*).

When Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه was about to leave the world, without consulting anyone, he named Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه as his successor.

Thereafter, when Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was fatally wounded by an

assassin, he said that there are none more deserving of the Caliphate *(Khilāfah)* than those persons with whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was pleased till his dying moments. He then took the names of six individuals from whom a Caliph *(Khalifa)* was to be nominated. These were Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Talhā رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdur Rahman bin Auf رضى الله عنه. He added that his son Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه also assist in the nomination, stressing that he not be included amongst the nominees. He then also told them that should Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه be nominated, he was worthy of the post, and should another Sahābi رضى الله عنه be appointed, Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه was to assist him.

After the demise of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, the six nominees gathered to nominate a leader from among them. Sayyidina Abdur Rahman رضى الله عنه advise that three of them hand over their rights to the Caliphate *(Khilāfah)* to the others. Upon this, Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه handed his right over to Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Talha رضى الله عنه handed his over to Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Sa'd gave his to Sayyidina Abdur Rahman رضى الله عنه. Then Sayyidina Abdur Rahman رضى الله عنه addressed Sayyidina Ali and Uthman رضى الله عنه saying that, if they agreed, he would nominate a leader from the two of them, stressing that he would be meticulous in the matter and choose the best of them. When they both agreed, he consulted privately with each of them, securing an undertaking from either of them that, should the other be chosen as Caliph *(Khalifa)*, he would accept the decision warmly. He later announced his nomination of Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه by requesting him to extend his hand. When Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه did so, he then personally pledged allegiance to him, followed by Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه. Those waiting outside were then allowed in and they followed suit.

This entire episode is recorded in Bukhari (v.1 p.524). This incident makes it evident that Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه was satisfied with the nomination of Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه and had even expressed his consent beforehand.

When Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه was martyred, the need arose to nominate another Caliph *(Khalifa)*. The Egyptian rebels (who were responsible for his martyrdom) demanded that Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه be the next Caliph *(Khalifa)*, but he was not prepared to do so. The people of Kufa sought Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه to assume the role, but were unable to locate him. When the people of Basra requested Sayyidina Talha رضى الله عنه to accept the caliphate *(Khilāfah)*, he refused, as did Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنهم. Eventually when Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه was put under much pressure, he accepted. The details of this event are recorded in "Al Bidāya wan Nihāyah" (*v.7 p.226*).

The four Caliphs *(Khulafa)* were nominated in this manner without the need for a general election. Not even all the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم participated in the process of nomination, nor the entire populace of Madinah. A few people chose the Caliph *(Khalifa)* and the rest accepted.

Enamoured by the occidental system of ignorant democracy, some people may argue that the method employed by the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم was

(Allāh forbid!) incorrect and that the correct way is that of democracy. Though such a foolish remark deserves no reply, the following shall, nevertheless, shed some light on the matter. Such a statement is, in reality, an objection directed towards Allāh himself. In the hundredth verse of Surah Taubah, Allāh praises the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم and those who follow them well, declaring *"Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh."* If it is presumed that these illustrious souls did not understand Islām and the correct method of choosing a leader, then who does understand Islām?

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Adopt my ways and those of the Righteous Caliphs *(Khulafa Rashidīn)"* [*Abu Dawūd and Tirmidhi*]. If they had not been legitimately instituted and had not correctly appointed their successors, they would never have been referred to as the Righteous Caliphs *(Khulafa Rashidīn)*. It is clearly contrary to the dictates of Belief *(Imān)* that a Muslim can possibly claim that none of the Caliphs *(Khalifas)* were Rāshid (righteous) and be enamoured by the system of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

إِن يَنصُرْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَنصُرُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۗ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿160﴾

(160) If Allāh helps you then none can overcome you, and if He leaves you without assistance, then who is there to help you? Only in Allāh should the believers trust.

IF ALLĀH HELPS, THEN NONE CAN OVERCOME

A previous verse declares that *"Verily Allāh loves those who place their trust in Him."* In the verse under discussion, Allāh instructs that only He be relied upon, and that the help of Allāh is the prerequisite for victory. Superior numbers and weapons are really irrelevant since the help of Allāh is all that is required to remain victorious. The Muslims overcame the disbelievers *(kuffār)* despite the fact that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were greater in number and strength.

If He leaves you without assistance, then who is there to help you ?" This fact was proven at Uhud. Assistance should only be sought from Allāh, in Whom all trust and reliance should be placed.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِىٍّ أَن يَغُلَّ ۚ وَمَن يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿161﴾

(161) It does not be hove a messenger that he deceives. He who deceives shall bring the object of his deceit on the Day of Judgment. Then every soul shall be paid in full for what it had earned and they will not be oppressed.

THE ONE WHO DECEIVES SHALL BRING HIS DECEIT WITH HIM ON THE DAY OF QIYAMAH

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v.2 p.5 1*) reports that after the battle of Badr, a red shawl could not be found. When some people indicated that it was perhaps the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who took it, their suggestion was rejected when the above verse was revealed, declaring that *"It does not behove a messenger that he deceives."*

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that the original meaning of the word "ghulūl" (*deception*) is 'to take something secretly.' This word has since been specifically associated with stealing from the spoils of war since this constitutes a misappropriation of wealth belonging to another.

"He who deceives shall bring the object of his deceit on the Day of Judgment." This is to disgrace such a person and that others come to learn of his deceit. Abu Dawūd records a hadith wherein it is reported that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gathered the booty, he would instruct Sayyidina Bilal رضى الله عنه to announce that whoever had any booty with him should bring it forth.

When all was collected, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would take out a fifth (as stated in the verse, *"Know that a fifth of whatever you acquire as booty is for Allāh and the messenger")*. The remaining wealth would then be distributed amongst the Muslim warriors. It once occurred that a person presented a rope made of hair after the booty had already been distributed. He entreated that this was what he had found as the spoils of war. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he had heard the announcement of Sayyidina Bilal رضى الله عنه. When he replied in the affirmative, he was asked what had prevented him from coming sooner. To this, he gave some unsatisfactory excuse. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Then you shall have to present this on the Day of Judgment. I shall never accept it from you!"

Muslim reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه the following narration from Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. He mentioned that during the battle of Khayber, many Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم reported to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that certain people had been martyred. When a certain person was mentioned in this regard, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that this person could never be a Shahīd *(martyr)* since he had seen him in the fire of Hell because of a shawl that he had stolen from the booty. Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه to announce three times that only those with Belief *(Imān)* shall enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. This instruction was duly complied with. [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" v.2 p.352*]

The person who steals anything shall carry the same upon his neck on the Day of Judgment. Sayyidina Abu Humaid Sā'idy رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once commissioned a person of the Bani Azd tribe to collect Zakāh. Upon returning, he handed the wealth over to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "This is for you and this was given to me as a gift."

Upon hearing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave a lecture. After praising Allāh, he said, "I have appointed certain people to fulfill some of the tasks Allāh has commissioned me to do. Now one of them comes to me saying that this is for you and this has been given to me as a gift. Why does he not rather

sit in his father or mother's house and see whether anyone gives him any gifts? I swear by the Being in whose hands my life lies! The person who misappropriates any of the wealth that he has been entrusted with shall carry it around his neck on the Day of Judgment. If it be a camel, it shall be crying out. If it be a cow, it shall be mooing, and a goat shall be bleating." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then raised his arms till the whiteness of his armpits became visible and prayed, "O Allāh, have I not conveyed? O Allāh, have I not conveyed?" *["Mishkātul Masābīh" p. 156]*

Those who misappropriate public funds should remember the Day of Judgment and seriously ponder over the consequences of their actions. They should constantly reflect on the conclusion to this verse where Allāh declares that on that fateful day *"Then every soul shall be paid in full for what it had earned and they will not be oppressed."*

أَفَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ رِضْوَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَنۢ بَآءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿162﴾
هُمْ دَرَجَٰتٌ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿163﴾

(162) Can the one who pursues the pleasure of Allāh be like he who deserves Allāh's wrath and whose abode shall be Hell? It is indeed the worst of abodes! (163) They are varied in ranks with Allāh And Allāh is the Seer of what they do.

THE SEEKERS OF ALLĀH'S PLEASURE ARE UNLIKE THOSE WHO EARN HIS WRATH

This verse differentiates between those who seek the pleasure of Allāh and those who, by their evil actions, earn His wrath. The two can never be equated. The verse is phrased as a rhetorical question so that the reader is prompted to give thought to the situation.

In this verse, Allāh mentions the seeker of His pleasure without speaking of his eventual entry into Heaven *(Jannah)*. This is so because this reward is inevitable and Allāh' s pleasure surpasses even Heaven *(Jannah)* in superiority.

With regard to the one who earns Allāh' s anger, mention is made of his eventual destination in the Hereafter. Allāh says that their *"abode shall be Hell. It is indeed the worst of abodes!"*

Thereafter Allāh refers to both parties when He says, *"They are varied in ranks with Allāh."* Those who earned the favour of Allāh shall occupy varying ranks in Heaven *(Jannah)* and those who displeased Him shall, according to the severity of their sins, be subjected to differing levels of punishment in Hell.

Allāh has already ordained these differing ranks and *"Allāh is the Seer of what they do."* According to their actions, they will receive retribution and no deed is hidden from Him.

لَقَدْ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ

وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ لَفِى
ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿164﴾

(164) Allāh has undoubtedly favoured the believers by sending in their midst a messenger from amongst them, who recites to them His verses, purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom. There is no doubt that these people were in manifest error before this.

ALLĀH HAS BESTOWED HIS BOUNTY BY SENDING HIS MESSENGER صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh is indeed most Bountiful and Munificent. Throughout the ages, people have succumbed to the devices of Satan *(Shaytān)*, resorting to infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* till there remained only a very small group of believers. Even those who believed in Allāh were not free of committing some shirk. Arabs and non-Arabs alike were steeped in infidelity *(kufr)*, subjected to the sway of Satan *(Shaytān)*.

In this dark and deviant atmosphere, Allāh sent His final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. His advent dispelled the darkness and the entire universe was illuminated with the light of Belief *(Imān)*. Millions of people destined for the fire of Hell were rescued, guaranteeing entry into Heaven *(Jannah)* for the faithful adherents till the Day of Judgment.

Allāh sent these Prophets عليهم السلام so that they not only invite others, but also practically demonstrate the religion, live amongst the people, reform them, recite to them and teach them the divine scripture as well as things of wisdom. The meaning of reformation and spiritual purification is that people are guided to dispel from within themselves all evil traits and immorality. The details of this Prophetic mission have been given in the commentary of verse 129 of Surah Baqarah.

أَوَلَمَّآ أَصَٰبَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُم مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّىٰ هَٰذَا ۖ قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿165﴾ وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ فَبِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿166﴾
وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا۟ ۚ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ قَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوِ ٱدْفَعُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا
لَّٱتَّبَعْنَٰكُمْ ۗ هُمْ لِلْكُفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَٰنِ ۚ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِى
قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿167﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا۟ لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا۟ ۗ قُلْ
فَٱدْرَءُوا۟ عَنْ أَنفُسِكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿168﴾

(165) When such a calamity will befall you, twice the magnitude of that which you had already afflicted, shall you say, "Where has this come from?" Say, "It is

from yourselves!" Verily Allāh is Able to do all things. (166) What afflicted you the day two armies clashed was by the decree of Allāh and so that He may ascertain who the believers were....... (167) ".....and He may ascertain who the hypocrites are. It was told to them, "Come fight in the way of Allāh or defend!" They reply, "If we knew how to fight we would have definitely followed you." That day they were closer to infidelity (kufr) than to Belief (Imān). They spoke with their tongues what was not in their hearts. Allāh knows well what they conceal. (168) Those who tell their brothers while they themselves sit idle, "If they had followed us they would not have been killed." Tell them, "Then thwart death from yourselves if you are indeed truthful."

SOLACE TO THE MUSLIMS AND THE EVIL PLIGHT OF THE MUNĀFIQĪN *(HYPOCRITES)*

The momentary defeat and injury suffered by the Muslims at the Battle of Uhud induced some people to exclaim, *"Where has this come from?"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is instructed to reply to them that the visible cause of this calamity is that *"It is from yourselves!"* This is due to the fact that they disobeyed the explicit instruction of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by deserting the mountain pass.

"......twice the magnitude of that which you had already afflicted..." This refers to the battle of Badr where the Muslims killed 70 infidels *(kuffār)* and captured another 70. This verse offers some consolation to the Muslims by telling them that the infidels *(kuffār)* had experienced twice the affliction the previous year. It also informs them that this was a result of their mutiny, therefore no grief should be expressed about the defeat.

"What afflicted you the day two armies clashed was by the decree of Allāh..." Although the apparent reason was their mutiny, everything occurs according to the decree of Allāh. All His ordinances contain wisdom, some of which were mentioned earlier and the others in this verse.

The first of those mentioned here are ..... *so that He may ascertain who the believers were (i.e. who are the sincere ones) and He may ascertain who the hypocrites are."* This refers to those who claimed to be Muslims but were disbelievers *(kuffār)* by heart. When the battle raged, their true colours showed through, as Allāh explains in the following verses.

"..... It was told to them, 'Come fight in the way of Allāh or (if you are unable to do this, then at least) defend!" i.e. At least stand by so that the Muslim army will appear to be stronger, thereby lending aid to the Muslims by discouraging the enemy. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās* رضى الله عنه]

"They reply, 'If we knew how to fight we would have definitely followed you." Another interpretation of this verse is that they meant to say, "If we knew that fighting was of any benefit, we would have participated with you." They did not deem it feasible that a small group face a much larger one, especially since they possessed fewer weapons and supplies. They felt that the Muslims did not even possess enough to make a stand, let alone fight the infidels *(kuffār)*. They considered a fight to be suicidal under such circumstances.

"That day they were closer to disbelief (kufr) than to Belief (Imān)." This verse

means that when they uttered these statements, they were closer to disbelief *(kufr)* than when they used to pretend to be Muslims in Madinah. In Madinah, they were closer to Belief *(Imān)* due to their association with the Muslims and their claim to Belief *(Imān)*. Their words and deeds now exposed their former claim, and any Muslim could now see for himself that they were indeed infidels *(kuffār)* by heart since no Muslim could speak in this manner.

"They spoke with their tongues what was not in their hearts." All their excuses of being ignorant of warfare and its intricacies were false. The real reason for their hesitation was that they did not want to participate in the battle. However *"Allāh knows well what they conceal."* While the Muslims were only able to know of some of their inner inclinations, Allāh has full knowledge of all their feelings.

BY NOT PARTICIPATING IN BATTLE, ONE CANNOT EVADE DEATH

"Those who tell their brothers while they themselves sit idle, 'If they had followed us, they would not have been killed:' Tell them, 'Then thwart death from yourselves if you are indeed truthful." It is indeed foolish to believe that by remaining at home a person can avoid death. If these people are true in their claim, they are challenged to thwart death when it presents itself before them at its appointed hour.

A hypocrite considers his life too valuable to be sacrificed in Allāh's path. A Believer *(Mu'min)*, on the contrary, intends only the pleasure of Allāh and will stop at nothing to sacrifice his very life in Allāh's cause.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتًۢا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿169﴾ فَرِحِينَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِم مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿170﴾ ۞ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿171﴾

(169) Never consider those slain in Allāh's way to be dead. Indeed they are alive, being sustained by their Lord. (170) They are jubilant with what their Lord gives them from His bounty; and rejoice for the sake of those who have yet not joined them, who have been left behind, that no fear shall overcome them, nor shall they grieve. (171) They rejoice because of the bounty from Allāh and His grace and because Allāh surely does not waste the rewards of the believers.

THE SHUHADĀ (MARTYRS) ARE ALIVE AND WELL

The previous verses quote the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* as saying with regard to the martyrs, *'If they had followed us, they would not have been killed."* This mode of address indicates that their deaths were unfortunate, and that it would have been best for them if they were still alive. The verse under discussion refutes this erroneous notion and offers succour and glad tidings to the Muslims.

Allāh says, *"Never consider those slain in Allāh 's way to be dead. Indeed they are alive, being sustained by their Lord."* Though they have none of the worldly bounties with them, they are at no disadvantage since they have things that are more superior.

Allāh states further that the Martyrs *(Shuhadā) "are jubilant with what their Lord gives them from His bounty and (in addition to this they also) rejoice for the sake of those who have yet not joined them, who have been left behind, that no fear shall overcome them, nor shall they grieve (if they are also martyred in Allāh's way)."*

In addition to this *"They rejoice because of the bounty from Allāh and His grace and because Allāh surely does not waste the rewards of the believers."*

Sayyidina Masrūq رحمة الله عليه narrates that they asked Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه concerning the verse, *"Never consider those slain in Allāh 's way to be dead. Indeed they are alive, being sustained by their Lord."* He replied that they *(the Sahāba* رضى الله عنهم*)* questioned the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم concerning the same verse. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The souls of martyrs cling on to the feet of green birds perched upon lanterns suspended beneath the throne of Allāh. They travel wherever they please in Heaven *(Jannah)* and then return to these lanterns."

"Directing His special attention to them, Allāh asked these martyrs, 'What do you desire?' They replied, 'What more can we desire when we are allowed to traverse through Heaven *(Jannah)* as we please?' When Allāh repeated the question thrice, they felt compelled to answer. They said, 'O our Lord, we wish that our souls be returned to our bodies so that we may again sacrifice our lives in Your cause." (Since returning to the world will not be allowed, they were left to be). [*Muslim v.2 p.135*]

The virtue of martyrs and martyrdom has already been discussed in Surah Baqarah under the discussion of the verse, *"Do not say that those slain in Allāh 's path are dead..." { Surah 2, verse 154 }*

ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِلَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَصَابَهُمُ ٱلْقَرْحُ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ
وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿172﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱخْشَوْهُمْ
فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَٰنًا وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا ٱللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ ٱلْوَكِيلُ ﴿173﴾ فَٱنقَلَبُوا۟ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوٓءٌ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ رِضْوَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿174﴾ إِنَّمَا
ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿175﴾

(172) Those who responded to the command of Allāh and the messenger after injury had afflicted them; for those of them who do good and adopt piety (taqwa) is a great reward. (173) Those who were told by the people, "Verily the enemy has gathered against you, so fear them." This only increased them in Belief (Imān) and they said, "Allāh is Sufficient for us and He is the Best of

Helpers. (174) So they returned with Allāh's bounty and grace without adversity afflicting them; and they pursued the pleasure of Allāh. Allāh is the Bestower of munificent bounties. (175) (The episode transpired because) It was only Devil (Shaytān) who put fear into the hearts of his allies. So do not fear them but fear Me if you are indeed believers.

PRAISE OF THOSE COMPANIONS *(SAHĀBA)* رضى الله عنهم WHO RESPONDED TO THE CALL OF ALLĀH AND HIS PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AFTER BEING INJURED

"Durrul Manthūr" *(v.2 p.101)* reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that when Abu Sufyān and his companions were returning from Uhud, they decided to attack the Muslims once again. They felt that their victory was insufficient and wished to wipe out all the Muslims.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received intelligence of this, he, together with the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, pursued the enemy to a place called Hamrā'ul Asad. Upon learning of the chase, Abu Sufyān and his army took flight. En route they met a few horsemen of the Bani Abdil Qais tribe. Abu Sufyān told them to pass the message on to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the Makkans were returning to attack Madinah so that all the Muslims may be annihilated. When the horsemen met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم at Hamrā'ul Asad and conveyed the message to him; the noble Prophet the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his companions remarked, *"Allāh is Sufficient for us and He is the Best of Helpers."*

Allāh revealed the aforementioned verses in praise of these valiant Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم who, despite being injured, responded to the order of Allāh and His the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم They had the courage to pursue the disbelievers *(kuffār)* up to Hamrā'ul Asad. When they received the warning of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* intense military preparation, with conviction and determination, they exclaimed, *"Allāh is Sufficient for us and He is the Best of Helpers."*

In a narration of Bayhaqi, it is reported from Ibn Shihab Zuhri رحمة الله عليه that when Abu Sufyān was returning, he mentioned that the next battle shall be at Badr where the Muslims had previously killed 70 of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. It was in response to this that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم marched to Badr after Uhud. They took with them goods for trade as well, so that they may do some business in the event that there was no battle.

On the way to Badr, Devil *(Shaytān)* deployed one of his accomplices to scare them from proceeding. He approached them saying that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* had made intense preparations for the battle. He warned them to rather refrain from proceeding, since they stood no chance and the risk would prove too great.

This deceptive appeal did not stir any feelings and the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم continued on their journey. Upon reaching Badr, they found no sign of the enemy. They proceeded to trade their goods and earned a handsome profit

from it.

The verse praises the action of those Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم who proceeded to chase the enemy after suffering serious injuries in the battle of Uhud. Mention is also made of the satanic ploys to mislead them and of the profits that they earned. Undeterred by the misleading pleas of Devil's *(Shaytān's)* allies, they turned their attention towards Allāh and exclaimed with perfect conviction, *"Hasbun Allāhu Wa Ni'mal Wakīl!" ("Allāh is sufficient for us and He is the best of helpers.")*

A Believer *(Mu'min)* should trust only in Allāh and, though the ploys and schemes of Devil *(Shaytān)* and his allies are a constant hindrance, he should realise that Allāh is indeed Sufficient for him to overcome all of these and He shall provide the necessary assistance. If it were not for the help of Allāh, Islām would have never spread as widely as it had done, for the enemies of Islām have never relaxed their sinister efforts against Islām. Allāh says, *"They wish to extinguish the light of Allāh with their mouths. Allāh shall surely finalise His light even though the disbelievers dread it."*

وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْكُفْرِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا ۗ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَلَّا
يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (176) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلْكُفْرَ
بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ لَن يَضُرُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (177) وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا
نُمْلِى لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا نُمْلِى لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوٓا۟ إِثْمًا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ (178)

(176) Let those who hasten into disbelief not grieve you. They can never harm Allāh in the least. Allāh wishes to assign no portion for them in the Hereafter and for them shall there be a dreadful chastisement. (177) Verily those who purchase disbelief for Belief (Imān) can never harm Allāh in the least and for them shall be a painful punishment. (178) Those who disbelieve should never think that the respite We give them is good for them. We grant them reprieve only so that they increase in sin and for them is a most disgracing punishment.

NO GRIEF SHOULD BE FELT AT THOSE WHO HASTEN TO DISBELIEF

Although the verse is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, all Muslims are intended. Allāh comforts the Muslims, telling them not be distressed by those who excel in disbelief *(kufr)* and attempt to destroy Islām at any given opportunity. The Muslims should never fear any harm from them, nor from their allies. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.133*]

"Let those who hasten into disbelief not grieve you." The Tabi'ī Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that this verse refers to those Munāfiqīn who did not participate in the battle of Uhud. According to Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه, it refers to the disbelievers *(kuffār)* in general even though it was revealed specifically with regard to the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*.

Irrespective of what the disbelievers *(kuffār)* do against the Muslims, Muslims should never allow it to harm them in the least. They will leave no stone unturned to harm Islām and hasten to do so, but *"They can never harm Allāh in the least."* The author of "Rūhul Ma'āani" writes that this verse means that they can never harm the friends of Allāh. According to other commentators, it means that they can never harm the Dīn *(religion)*of Allāh.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* have never ceased and will never cease their efforts to harm and destroy Islām, but the Muslim should never be grieved about this and always place his trust in Allāh, who is the Best of Helpers.

"Allāh wishes to assign no portion for them in the Hereafter and for them shall there be a dreadful chastisement." In this world, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* are under the illusion that they are in good stead without accepting Islām. However, this shall be short lived, for they will meet a grievous punishment in the Hereafter.

"Verily those who purchase disbelief for Belief (Imān) can never Harm Allāh in the least and for them shall there be a painful punishment." This verse means that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* choose disbelief *(kufr)* instead of Belief *(Imān)*. Repetition of the fact that they *"can never harm Allāh in the least"* is for emphasis. Other commentators maintain that the repetition is to allude to the fact that these people harm only themselves by their misdeeds, earning for themselves the dreadful chastisement of the Hereafter.

"Those who disbelieve should never think that the respite we give them is good for them. We grant them reprieve only so that they increase in sin and for them is a most disgracing punishment." The disbelievers *(kuffār)* think that their affluence and favourable conditions in this world are a sign that Allāh is pleased with them. These conditions are merely a form of respite for them from Allāh so that they may excel in their sins. Eventually when these reach the limits, Allāh seizes them and they are subjected to the extremes of punishment.

This subject is referred to in numerous verses of the Qur'ān. In Surah A'rāf Allāh says, *"We shall lead on those who deny Allāh 's verses to an extent that they do not know. I shall grant them respite. My plan is indeed very mighty."* [*Surah 7, verses 182/3*]

In a verse of Surah Taubah Allāh says, *"So do not let their wealth and their children impress you. Allāh intends to punish them with these in this worldly life and that their souls depart while they are disbelievers."* [*Surah 9, verse 55*]

The Muslim should also take heed from this verse. An abundance of wealth and worldly possessions do not mean that Allāh is pleased with a person. Allāh even gives these things to those whom He dislikes. In fact, He sometimes gives them more of it than He does to His loved ones. The reason for this is that they utilise these means to excel in their sins. Then Allāh grabs hold of them most forcefully and casts them into chastisement.

For this reason, Allāh grants many of His enemies much more than He gives His sincere bondsmen. Those who are unfamiliar with this divine wisdom express surprise at this phenomenon and some even go to the extent of objecting. The pious person who earns Lawful *(Halāl)*wealth shall experience much blessings in his wealth even though it be a little. On the other hand, the person

who accrues an abundance of wealth unlawfully, while he himself increases in sin [leading him to disbelief *(kufr)*], finds that such wealth has no blessings. Allāh is merely giving him respite.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Never envy the fortune of a sinner for you know not what calamity he has to face after his death. By Allāh there is a Killer for him that shall never die (i.e. Hell)." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" pg. 447*]

مَّا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبِ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى ٱلْغَيْبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَجْتَبِى مِن رُّسُلِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَإِن تُؤْمِنُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٩﴾

179. Allāh does not wish to leave the believers in the same condition that you are in till he separates the pure from the impure. Allāh does not inform you of the unseen, but Allāh chooses whom He pleases from His messengers. So believe in Allāh and His messengers, and if you believe and adopt piety (taqwa), yours shall be a grand reward.

ALLĀH SHALL SEPARATE THE GOOD FROM THE EVIL

The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* used to mix with the Muslims and claim to be Muslims as well. They even participated in the Salāh with the Muslims. In this way, it became impossible to discern who was a Munafiq *(hypocrite)* and who was not. In this verse, Allāh declares that He shall not leave the Muslims as they are, but shall bring such trials and tribulations to pass whereby the impure Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* shall be separated from the pure (Muslims). At times of adversity true colours shine forth from people.

"Allāh does not inform you of the unseen." This verse explains that it is against the wisdom of Allāh that He merely informs His servants of the inner hypocrisy lurking within the hearts of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. He exposes this in a practical manner by subjecting them to tests. When the occasion arises for them to spend their lives and wealth in the cause of Dīn *(religion)*, they shrink away and desert - as was witnessed at Uhud. At such times, their hypocrisy is also evident by their words when they make statements of disbelief *(kufr)*.

If Allāh had informed the Muslims of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*, they could have easily denied it, demanding evidence. However, when they physically separate themselves from the Muslims on such occasions of trial, they can have no excuse to tender.

".........but Allāh chooses whom He pleases from His messengers." He grants the knowledge of the unseen to those of His Prophet عليه السلام whom He wills. Allāh directly informed His beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of all those who were Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* and these were also manifested at times of adversity. In this way they were disgraced before everyone. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4*

p.137]

Allāh then states, *"So believe in Allāh and His messengers, and if you believe and adopt piety (taqwa), yours shall be a grand reward."*

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ
لَّهُمْ ۖ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَٰثُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٨٠﴾

180. Those who are miserly with what Allāh has given them of His bounty should never think that this is best for them. Indeed it is worse for them! That which they hoard shall soon be their collar on the Day of Judgment. To Allāh belongs the legacy of the heavens and the earth and Allāh is Informed of what you do.

MISERS SHOULD NOT THINK THAT THEIR MISERLINESS IS GOOD FOR THEM

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* dislike spending in the cause of Allāh as much as they dislike sacrificing their lives. Allāh addresses such people saying, *"Those who are miserly with what Allāh has given them of His bounty should never think that this is best for them. Indeed it is worse for them!"*

The consequence of their stinginess shall present itself before them on the Day of Judgment when *"That which they hoard shall soon be their collar on the Day of Judgment."* Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Allāh shall transform the wealth of those who do not give their Zakāh into a bald snake on the Day of Judgment (the baldness of the snake is due to the intensity of its venom). This snake shall be placed around his neck like a collar and, gripping hold of the sides of his mouth, it will tell him, 'I am your wealth! I am your treasure!' Then the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم recited the verses above viz. *"Those who are miserly with what Allāh has given them..."* [*Bukhari v.1 p.1881*]

"To Allāh belongs the legacy of the heavens and the earth..." Everything belongs to Allāh, who is the true Owner of all things. None is partner to Him in this. It is foolish for a person not to spend the wealth Allāh has given him in the way He has ordained.

".....and Allāh is Informed of what you do." All acts of generosity and those of miserliness are seen by Allāh, and He shall confer retribution.

لَّقَدْ سَمِعَ ٱللَّهُ قَوْلَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَآءُ ۘ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا۟
وَقَتْلَهُمُ ٱلْأَنۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٨١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا

قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ ﴿182﴾ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَهِدَ
إِلَيْنَا أَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَنَا بِقُرْبَانٍ تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ قُلْ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
رُسُلٌ مِنْ قَبْلِي بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالَّذِي قُلْتُمْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ
﴿183﴾ فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كُذِّبَ رُسُلٌ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ
الْمُنِيرِ ﴿184﴾

(181) Allāh had undoubtedly heard the statement of those who say, "Surely Allāh is poor and we are wealthy!" Soon We shall record what they say and their unwarranted slaying of the Prophet, and We will tell them, "Taste the punishment of the Blaze!" (182) This is on account of that which your own hands presented and Allāh is no oppressor to His bondsmen. (183) The ones who say, "Verily Allāh has undertaken from us that we do not believe in any Prophet till he brings an offering that will be consumed by a fire." Tell them, "Indeed numerous Prophet have come to you before me with clear signs as well as with that which you speak of. So why did you slay them if you are indeed truthful?" (184) So if they deny you then (remember that) they have denied many Prophet before you who had come to them with clear signs, scriptures and the illuminated book.

THE ABSURDITY OF THE JEWS AND THE PROMISE OF THEIR PUNISHMENT

A narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه is recorded in Lubābun Nuqūl (*p.61*) wherein he says that once Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه came to the school of the Jews where he saw many people gathered around a person by the name of Finhās. Upon seeing Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه, Finhās remarked, "O Abu Bakr! We have no need for Allāh, but He needs us. If He was Independent why does He ask us for loans? Your Prophet tells us that Allāh needs a loan." On hearing this, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه became infuriated and slapped Finhās.

The Jew went to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and complained to him about the conduct of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and asked him what had happened. He said that Finhās called Allāh poor and said that they were wealthy. When Finhās denied this, Allāh revealed the above verse.

It had also been reported from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه that when the verse *"Who shall lend to Allāh a good loan?"* was revealed, the Jews came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "O Muhammad, it seems as if your Lord has become poor that He begs from people!" On this occasion, Allāh revealed the verse *"Allāh had undoubtedly heard the statement of those who say, 'Surely Allāh is poor and we are wealthy!"*

It is evident that these people are blind not to perceive that Allāh was

referring to charity in this verse. Allāh shall repay the charitable ones with a grand reward in the Hereafter. It is for this reason that Allāh refers to it as a loan. Since everything belongs to Allāh, He is at liberty to instruct His servants to spend all their wealth without promising repayment. He is totally Independent and does not require anything. The Jews, in their ignorance could not understand that Allāh needs no favours from anyone.

"Soon We shall record what they say (in their books of deeds)..." These foul statements of theirs shall be preserved in writing and on the strength of this shall they be punished. Besides this blasphemous utterance, they perpetrated much more severe sins in the past such as *"their unwarranted slaying of the Prophet."*

Although this vile act was carried out by their forefathers, the Jews to come later supported this action and saw no harm in it. For this reason, it will be entered into their records as well, and they will suffer Hell due to their disbelief and evil actions. There they shall be told, *"Taste the punishment of the Blaze! This is on account of that which your own hands presented and Allāh is no oppressor to His bondsmen."*

Thereafter Allāh makes reference to yet another profanity of the Jews. They were *"The ones who say, 'Verily Allāh has undertaken from us (in the Torah) that we do not believe in any (person who claims to be a) Prophet till he brings an offering that will be consumed by a fire."* This fire from the heavens shall serve as a sign of acceptance from Allāh, indicating that the person is indeed a Prophet.

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Tell them, 'Indeed numerous Prophet have come to you before me with clear signs as well as with that which you speak of (i.e. they presented the offering which was consumed by a celestial fire)."* This they not only refused to accept, but they murdered these Prophets عليهم السلام of Allāh.

For this reason they are asked, *"So why did you slay them if you are indeed truthful?"* They merely said these things by way of excuse because they did not want to accept the Prophet.

"So if they deny you then (remember that) they have denied many Prophet before you who had come to them with clear signs, scriptures and the illuminated book." This verse also consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that he may not be despondent about the behaviour of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Their falsification is nothing new, but they did the same to all the other Prophet who came to them, even though these Prophets عليهم السلام showed them miracles and divine scriptures. Those who are not destined to believe shall never do so; hence every Prophet had to exercise patience.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۗ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۖ فَمَن زُحْزِحَ عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۗ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَـٰعُ ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿185﴾

(185) Every soul shall taste death and (the fact of the matter is that) you will be given your rewards in full on the Day of Judgment. Whoever is saved from the

fire and entered into Heaven (Jannah) shall truly be successful. The life of this world is but an object of deceit.

EVERY SOUL SHALL TASTE DEATH

Whether a person is a Believer *(Mu'min)* or a disbeliever *(kāfir)*, death shall put an end to his life in this world. Thereafter he will reap the rewards of whatever good he carried out. Actions will be presented before Allāh and reckoning shall take place. Allāh shall preside over the reckoning and finally a group will be dispatched to Heaven *(Jannah)* and another to Hell. *"Whoever is saved from the fire and entered into Heaven (Jannah) shall truly be successful."*

WHO ARE THE SUCCESSFUL ONES?

People have defined success in numerous ways. Political leaders consider themselves to be successful, while entrepreneurs, merchants and bankers also see themselves as successful. None consider their plight in the Hereafter. According to Allāh's definition, the successful people are those who *"are saved from the fire (of Hell) and entered into Heaven (Jannah)."*

This verse may be directed at the Jews who, intoxicated by their affluence, remain upon disbelief *(kufr)* and yet deem themselves to be successful. Because of their deviation, they hurl themselves into the fire of Hell of which they are oblivious because their gazes are fixed upon the temporary gains of this world.

Muslims should also derive lessons from this and never consider themselves to be unsuccessful when viewing the prosperity of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. They should be content with the knowledge that they will be entered into Heaven *(Jannah)* because of their Belief *(Imān)* and remain far from the scorching blaze of Hell where the disbelievers *(kuffār)* (despite all their wealth in this world) will suffer till eternity.

"The life of this world is but an object of deceit. The explanation of this verse can fill thousands of pages. The deceptive nature of this world can easily be witnessed by turning back the pages of history. It can be seen in the lives of those who possessed treasures, the kings and monarchs of bygone times, and those who were considered to be prosperous. The revolutions and tides of change unfolded before their very eyes, clearly revealing the deception in which they floundered.

This world (as described in numerous verses of the Qur'ān) is like a plantation which was flourishing. Thereafter it dried and the farmers reduced it to a bare field. People constantly witness the ever-changing façade of the world, yet continue to be beguiled by its apparent attraction, thinking that death shall never overcome them. They live and die for its acquisition, remaining totally oblivious of the everlasting bounties and torments of the Hereafter.

۞ لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِيٓ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ أَذًى كَثِيرًا ۚ وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا۟

(186) Most assuredly you will face tests in your wealth and your persons. You will definitely hear much painful abuse from those who have been given the book before you and from those who commit idolatry. If you are patient and adopt piety (taqwa), then surely these are from the most gallant deeds.

YOU WILL SURELY BE TRIED IN YOUR PROPERTY AND SOULS

This verse teaches the Muslims that they should never think that the hardships which they face are the last. After these, many more shall soon present themselves as tests. These tests shall affect their lives, health and property. Each should be borne with courage and perseverance..

Besides these, Muslims will also be faced with various obstacles and malicious statements from the Jews, Christians and polytheists *(Mushrikīn)*. They shall never cease to hurl abuse at the Muslim, so he must tolerate their abuses and continue with forbearance, fortitude and piety *(taqwa)*. By exercising partial, we will find comfort and by adopting piety *(taqwa)* our actions are perfected.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُۥ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُۥ فَنَبَذُوهُ
وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَٱشْتَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَبِئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَآ أَتَوا۟ وَّيُحِبُّونَ أَن يُحْمَدُوا۟ بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا۟ فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُم بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْعَذَابِ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨٨﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٨٩﴾

(187) When Allāh took a pledge from those given the book (saying), "You must surely expound it to mankind and not conceal it." They then threw it behind their backs and sold it at a measly price. Evil indeed was that which they sold. (188) Never think that those people are safe from the fire who gloat about what they did and enjoy to be praised for what they did not do. Theirs shall be a agonising punishment. (189) To Allāh belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and Allāh is Able to do all things.

THE PLEDGE TAKEN FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK AND THE EVASION OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

Allāh took a pledge from the scholars of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* that they must convey the scriptures to the people. They, however, failed to honour the pledge and chose to conceal the true teachings merely to gain the wealth of the world. For the petty gains of this transitory world, they sacrificed their welfare in the Hereafter.

The incidents of this crime are many. It once occurred that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم enquired from the Jews a matter that was in the Torah. They told

him something that was incorrect, concealing the truth of the matter. When they departed from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they felt exuberant that they had performed well and wished to be praised for expounding the book of Allāh. On this occasion Allāh revealed the verse, *"Never think that those people are safe from the fire who gloat about what they did and enjoy to be praised for what they did not do. Theirs shall be a agonising punishment."*

According to other narrations, the verse was revealed with regard to those Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* who did not participate in Jihād *(religion war)* and thereafter made excuses to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he returned. They wished to receive the same praise accorded to the Mujāhidīn even though they failed to participate. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.2 p. 108*]

There is no discrepancy between the two incidents since the verse applies to both. It is instinctive with man that he desires to be praised and this desire swells to the extent that he wants to receive praise even for what he did not do. The psyche of a sincere Muslim servant of Allāh is that he does not wish to be praised for the actions he does, let alone those that he is not responsible for.

Once, when Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه was passing through the market-place, he overheard someone tell another that Sayyidina Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه stood in Salāh the entire night through. After this episode, the Scholar *(Imām)* began offering Salāh the entire night through, saying that he disliked receiving praise for something that he did not do.

"To Allāh belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and Allāh is Able to do all things." Those who conceal the truth merely to earn the measly gains of this world should bear in mind that everything belongs to Allāh and that they should rather ask their needs from Him instead of resorting to this misdeed.

The Muslims are also reminded not to look greedily at what the sinners and disbelievers *(kuffār)* possess for the real Owner of everything is Allāh. He may grant you the same if He so wishes and even much more than they have.

إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ
﴿190﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿191﴾ رَبَّنَآ
إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ ٱلنَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُۥ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿192﴾ رَّبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا
مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِى لِلْإِيمَٰنِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَـَٔامَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ
عَنَّا سَيِّـَٔاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ ٱلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿193﴾ رَبَّنَا وَءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿194﴾ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّى لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ
عَٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَأُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ

وَأُوذُواْ فِى سَبِيلِى وَقَـٰتَلُواْ وَقُتِلُواْ لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلثَّوَابِ ﴿195﴾

(190) Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and day are signs for those who have intelligence. (191) Those who remember Allāh standing, sitting and reclining, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and earth; (saying) "Our Lord You have not created all this in vain! We glorify Your purity so save us from the punishment of the fire." (192) "Our Lord, indeed You have disgraced the one whom You enter in the fire. There shall be none to help the oppressors." (193) Our Lord, verily we have heard the caller calling to Belief (saying), 'Believe in your Lord!' So we believed. Our Lord! Pardon our sins, remit from us our evil deeds and grant us a death with the righteous ones. (194.)"Our Lord, confer upon us what You have promised us by Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Judgment. Verily You do not break Your promise." (195) So Allāh accepted their prayer (saying), "Surely I shall not put to waste the action of any person from you, be he male or female. You are from each other. Those who migrate, are exiled from their homes, suffer pain in My cause, fight and are slain, I shall most certainly remit from them their evil deeds and certainly enter them into such gardens beneath which rivers flow." This is the reward from Allāh and with Allāh are the best rewards.

TRAITS OF THE INTELLIGENT ONES AND THEIR PRAYERS *(DU'ĀS)*

Allāh begins these verses by declaring, *"Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and day (the divine system whereby night and day follow each other) are signs for those who have intelligence."* The above are such signs that every intelligent person can witness before him. The intelligent ones reflect over these phenomena and, struck with awe and amazement, they exclaim, *"Our Lord You have not created all this in vain! We glorify Your purity so save us from the punishment of the fire.."*

Allāh further describes these intelligent people as, *"Those who remember Allāh standing, sitting and reclining, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and earth."* These people remember Allāh with their tongues as well as with their hearts. Mention of Allāh's Being and Attributes, as well as His Might and Wisdom are all included in the remembrance *(dhikr)* of Allāh.

The truly intelligent people are those who recognise Allāh. Their intelligence demands that they remember Him at all times and in all conditions *("standing, sitting and reclining")*.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The gathering devoid of the remembrance *(dhikr)* of Allāh and salutations upon His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم shall be the detriment of those gathered. If Allāh wills, He may punish them or, if He wills, He may pardon them."

According to another narration the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The

person who, while reclining, does not remember Allāh, then this act of his shall be to his detriment. (In the same way) The walking of the person who does not remember Allāh while doing so, shall also be to his detriment. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.409*]

The remembrance *(dhikr)* of Allāh is the very life source of this world. The universe shall not be destroyed as long as there exists a single person to say Allāh! Allāh! [*Muslim v.1 p.84*]

Many people are considered to be intelligent because of their mastery of the sciences. However, their knowledge has not aided them to recognise Allāh and some of them even deny His existence. In their studies of the creation of Allāh, they do not concede His greatness and attribute everything to 'nature' and "natural" causes.

Such people are deprived of Allāh's recognition and thus do not perceive the reason for their existence in this world. They are also oblivious of what is to become of them after their deaths and fail to realise that they have to submit to the divine decree of Allāh in their lives. Their knowledge and experience is limited to the things of this world. Allāh says in Surah Rūm. *"They know the superficial things of the worldly life, but are ignorant of the Hereafter."* [*Surah 30, verse 7*]

The first of the prayers of the intelligent ones is, *"Our Lord, indeed You have disgraced the one whom You enter in the fire."* The disgrace of suffering in the fire of Hell is unsurpassed by any other. The person who will be cast into Hell will be disgraced because s/he will be punished in front of all mankind. It is indeed tragic that people are only concerned that they be saved from the disgrace of this world and pay no heed to that of the Hereafter. Allāh declares in another verse of the Qur'ān, *"Undoubtedly the punishment of the Hereafter is more disgracing, and they shall not be helped."*

"There shall be none to help the oppressors." The greatest oppression is disbelief *(kufr)*, as Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"The disbelievers (kuffār) are indeed the oppressors!"* [*Surah 2, verse 254*]. They will stand alone on the Day of Judgment, with none to assist them at all.

The intelligent ones submit further, *"Our Lord, verily we have heard the caller calling to Imān (saying), 'Believe in your Lord!' So we believed. Our Lord! Pardon our sins, remit from us our evil deeds and grant us a death with the righteous ones. Our Lord, confer upon us what You have promised us by Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Judgment. Verily You do not break Your promise."*

With regard to the *"caller calling to Imān"*, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" records two interpretations. The first is reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه who say that it refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The second opinion, held by the commentator Tabari رحمة الله عليه, is that it refers to the Qur'ān. He says that the Qur'ān is such a caller that shall remain till the Day of Judgment, never faltering in its duty.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" mentions further that every person (till the Day of Judgment) who responds to the call of Islām may claim to have hearkened to the *"caller calling to Belief (Imān)"* even though the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم may have passed away long before.

The word "munādi" is used in the verse instead of the popular word of "dā'ī" because its meaning is more emphasised. A "munādi" cannot do without calling loudly, whereas the "dā'ī" may do so. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, when delivering a sermon, would raise his voice and often exclaim, "Those present should deliver the message to those who are absent!"

"So we believed. Our Lord! Pardon our sins..." This verse refers to the fact that the forgiveness of sins is only possible after Imān. Allāh will not forgive the person who does not possess Imān.

"...... remit from us our evil deeds..." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" wants that this phrase is mentioned after *"sins"* even though both imply the same thing. The reason for this is that *"sins"* refer to misdeeds of the past, whereas *"evil deeds"* refer to those that still may be committed in the future. Others maintain that *"sins"* refer to major sins and *"evil deeds"* refer to minor sins.

Other commentators are of the opinion that "sins" refer to those that were perpetrated intentionally (knowing that these were sins). On the other hand, those sins that were committed unknowingly are referred to as "evil deeds." It is gathered from this that it is necessary to seek pardon for those deeds committed unintentionally as well. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.4 p.164*]

"........and grant us a death with the righteous ones." This verse means that they desire to be counted amongst the righteous ones and treated likewise after their deaths. This was also the supplication *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام when he said, *"Grant me death as a Muslim and permit me to meet with the righteous."* [*Surah Yusuf, verse 101*]

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that the mode of speech in *"with the righteous* ones" indicates humility and etiquette. It is as if the person is saying that although he is not of the righteous, he wishes to be included in their ranks.

"Our Lord, confer upon us what You have promised us by Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Judgment. Verily You do not break Your promise." In this supplication, they beseech Allāh for those rewards that He, through His Prophet عليه السلام, promised for the practising of good deeds and abstaining from sins. They are asking for the full recompense of these actions and that Allāh overlook the deficiencies therein.

Other commentators maintain that *"what You have promised us"* refers to divine assistance against their enemies. In this case, they are requesting for something of this world, and then (for the Hereafter) they plead, *"do not disgrace us on the Day of Judgment (by subjecting us to punishment)."*

"Verily You do not break Your promise." Here they express their conviction that Allāh will accept their supplications *(du'ās)*. Allāh declares in Surah Baqarah, *"I accept the prayer of the caller when he calls unto Me"* [*Surah 2, verse 186*]. Similarly He says in Surah Mu'min, *"Your Lord says, 'Call unto Me and I shall accept!"* [*Surah 40, verse 60*]

The *"promise"* referred to in this verse is the resurrection after death. This is the accepted interpretation reported from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه. The supplication *(du'ā)* is, therefore, that since the advent of the Day of Judgment is

inevitable, Allāh should protect them from its chastisement and disgrace.

ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR SUPPLICATIONS *(DU'ĀS)*

"So Allāh accepted their prayer (saying), 'Surely I shall not put to waste the action of any person from you, be he male or female. You are from each other. Those who migrate, are exiled from their homes, suffer pain in My cause, fight and are slain, I shall most certainly remit from them their evil deeds and certainly enter them into such gardens beneath which rivers flow.' This is the reward from Allāh and with Allāh are the best rewards."

The migration mentioned in this verse refers to the emigration of Muslims from their homeland because of pressure from the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. They only migrate to safeguard their Dīn *(religion)* and preserve their Belief *(Imān)*, thereby making the great sacrifice of leaving behind all their loved ones, properties and wealth.

Thereafter, Allāh speaks of their sufferings in Jihād *(religion war)*, which they endured with great forbearance. They fought in Jihād *(religion war)* till finally they made the ultimate sacrifice of their very lives in the cause of safeguarding the Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh. Jihād *(religion war)* is of such importance that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has described Jihād *(religion war)* as being the crown of all good deeds(*"Mishkātul Masābīh" pg. 14*).

At the end of the verse, Allāh declares *"with Allāh are the best rewards."* This indicates that every reward bestowed by Allāh shall be of the best kind.

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ (196) مَتَٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ (197) لَٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّلْأَبْرَارِ (198)

(196) Let not the travelling about of the disbelievers through the lands deceive you. (197) It is but a meagre prosperity and their final abode will be Hell. It is a contemptible abode indeed. (198) However, for those who fear their Lord shall be gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever. This is the hospitality from their Lord, and what Allāh has with Him is best for the righteous.

DO NOT BE DECEIVED BY THE AFFLUENCE OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

The previous verse referred to the rewards to be awarded to the believers. These consist of both the rich and the poor. Allāh consoles the poor amongst them not to despair about the way the disbelievers *(kuffār)* traverse through the land, earning its wealth and riches. Their apparent is well-being but transitory and shall soon vanish. Then they will have to face the everlasting torment of the fire of Hell.

It is recorded in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.134*) that the verse refers to the

polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* of Makkah who were extremely wealthy, travelling far and wide find reaping great profits from their trade. The statement slipped from the tongues of certain Muslims who said, "How is it that the enemies of Allāh are enjoying such providence whereas we are suffering in hunger and poverty?" It was in reply to this that the above verse was revealed.

The verse mentions that Hell shall be *"a contemptible abode indeed."* The Arabic word for 'abode' used in this verse is "mihād," which, actually refers to a bed. Since the idolators, due to their resources, were able to afford the best of comforts including soft and snug beds, Allāh makes mention of their final bed. This shall be very dissimilar to what they were accustomed to in this world. The abode of the Hereafter shall offer them no comfort, nor will they be able to hope for any sleep.

During the time when the Qur'ān was revealed, the only means of transport was animals. In today's times, with the invention of modern modes of transport, their' *"travelling about in the lands"* can be understood more vividly. A person can now travel through Europe and Asia in the same day. Others may leave for America and return in a matter of hours, while travelling from Asia to Australia may be done in the time it would take a person of former times to travel only a few miles. The message of the Qur'ān is for people of all ages till the Day of Judgment. A similar reference is made in Surah Mu'min where Allāh says, *"Only the disbelievers dispute with regard to the verse of Allāh, so let not their travels through the lands beguile you."* [*Surah 40, verse 4*]

THE REWARD OF THE PIOUS

"However, for those who fear their Lord shall be gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever." The righteous servants of Allāh shall receive such rewards from Allāh that the people of disbelief *(kufr)* cannot even imagine. What the disbelievers *(kuffār)* have in this world pales into insignificance when compared to the rewards of the Hereafter, especially when their worldly fortune will be a cause of chastisement for them in the next world. Unlike these temporary things, the rewards and bounties of the Hereafter are eternal and shall never be lost.

"This is the hospitality from their Lord, and what Allāh has is best for the righteous." The rewards of the Hereafter are abundant and everlasting whereas that which the disbelievers *(kuffār)* enjoy is limited and frivolous, awaiting destruction.

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَمَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَٰشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿199﴾

(199) Without doubt there are those from the people of book (Ahlul Kitāb) who believe in Allāh, what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allāh. They do not purchase with the verses

of Allāh a trifling gain. The reward of these people is with their Lord. Verily Allāh is swift at reckoning.

THE REWARD OF THE BELIEVING PEOPLE OF THE BOOK *(AHLUL KITĀB)*

This verse tells us that not all the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* are disbelievers, but that some of them believe in Allāh, in His final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and in His final book, the Qur'ān. They also believe in all the previous scriptures revealed to the Prophet عليه السلام. They do not display arrogance and haughtiness before' Allāh, but submit before Him in humility.

They do not desire the world and do not barter the verses of Allāh for the paltry gains of the world by tendering misleading interpretations of their scripture to people at a price. They only long after the pleasure of their Lord and the Hereafter. They expound the teachings of Allāh in all its purity, thereby becoming worthy of reward from Allāh.

"The reward of these people is with their Lord." This means that they shall receive the rewards promised to them by Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"These people shall be granted a double reward due to their patience."* [*Surah 28, verse 54*]

"Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.134*) narrates from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās, Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه that the verse refers to Najāshi (the king Abysinnia who accepted Islām). When he passed away, Jibr'īl عليه السلام came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informing him of the king's death. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced to the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, "Come perform the Janāza Salāh *(prayer for the deceased)* for your brother who passed away in a land foreign to your own!"

Thev proceeded to Baqī and (by miracle) the corpse of Najāshi was brought before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Salāh was performed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed for his forgiveness and exhorted the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم to do the same for their deceased brother. On seeing this, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* remarked, "Look at these people praying for a Abysinnian Christian whom they had never seen and who never belonged to their religion!" On this occasion the above verse was revealed.

Sayyidina Mujāhid, Sayyidina Ibn Juraij رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Ibn Zaid رحمة الله عليه are of the opinion that the verse applies to all the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* who accepted Islām. There is no disparity between the two opinions since the verse could have a general connotation despite being revealed with regard to a specific person.

"Verily Allāh is swjft at reckoning." He shall reward those who do good and punish the evil doers. The apparent delay of retribution in this world should not fool anyone.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ٱصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَٱتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿200﴾

(200) O you who believe, exercise patience, remain steadfast when confronted, continue doing good deeds and fear Allāh so that you may be successful.

A WORD OF ADVICE TO THE BELIEVERS

In this final verse of Surah Āl Imrān, Allāh gives four pieces of pertinent advice to the Muslims. In brief, it encompasses their behaviour in normal circumstances coupled with how to face the enemy in combat.

The first advice is that of endurance and patience, the three types of which should be borne in mind (i.e. carrying out good deeds, abstaining from sin, and not being disconcerted during times of adversity).

The second advice is to remain steadfast and resolute when faced by the enemy in battle. Although this message is included in the first instruction to be patient, it is mentioned separately here because patience is more difficult, therefore more virtuous in times of war. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni"*]

The third word of advice is "rābitu." The literal meaning of this word is to 'tie' oneself to a task i.e. to be resolute. It also refers to the maintenance and preparation of animals in war, as Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"Prepare for them (the enemy) whatever resources you can muster, and from the harnessed horse by which you may strike terror into the enemy of Allāh and your enemy."* [*Surah 8, verse 60*]

The word *("rābitu")* also refers to guarding the borders of the Islāmic state. The opportunity to fight in Jihād *(religion war)* is not always found, but the threat of an enemy attacking a Muslim country is ever present. For this reason, it is always necessary that the borders of a country be perpetually guarded. There lies great virtue in this act.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni", in the interpretation of this verse, writes that Muslims should remain stationed at the borders with their horses, awaiting the outbreak of Jihād *(religion war)*. Their preparations should therefore be in all earnest, excelling those of the enemy.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Patrolling the borders (of an Islāmic state) in the path of Allāh for a single day is better than the entire world and whatever it contains." [*Bukhari v.1 p.405*]

Sayyidina Salman رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Patrolling the Islāmic borders for a single night is better than fasting and standing daily in Salāh for an entire month. If the person has to die in this state, then all the actions he used to carry out will be perpetuated. He will continue to receive sustenance and he will not fear those who mete the punishment of the grave." [*Muslim v.2 p.142*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who dies in the path of Allāh while guarding the borders shall be saved from the greatest fright (i.e. the horror of the Day of Judgment). He will be fed-every morning and evening in the grave and will continue to receive the reward of the Murābit (person guarding the borders) till the day when Allāh shall resurrect him from the grave." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.243*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was

asked concerning the reward of 'ribāt' (patrolling the borders). He replied, "The person who engages in ribāt for a single night protecting the Muslims from an enemy attack shall receive the collective reward of the actions of all those whom he is protecting and who are performing Salāh or fasting." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.245]*

Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A single day spent in ribāt is superior to a thousand days spent in other acts of worship." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.246*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Two eyes will never be touched by the fire of Hell. One is that eye which shed a tear out of fear for Allāh, and the other is that eye which stayed awake safeguarding the Muslims in the path of Allāh." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.248*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told them, "Should I not inform you of a night superior to the night of Qadr?" He then continued to say, "It is that night fraught with danger wherein a person stands on guard (protecting the Muslims), not knowing whether he shall ever return home." (Despite this fear, he remains stationed at his post). [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.250]*

It is learnt from the narrations of Hadith that the great virtue promised is not only reserved for the one who is stationed at the border. It shall also apply to any person who spends time guarding the Muslims, be he in a town or at any other locality.

The Ahādīth have also described strict adherence to a good action as ribāt. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked them, "Should I not inform you of those actions whereby Allāh will pardon your sins and elevate your ranks?" When the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم asked to be informed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that they were:

1. *To make proper ablution despite adverse conditions (when it is cold hot, and in all places).*
2. *To frequent the Mosque (Masjid).*
3. *To eagerly await the next Salāh after just completing one.*

After mentioning these, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "This is ribāt!" (i.e. a person should bind himself to such actions). According to certain narrations, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repeated, "This is ribāt!" twice. [*Muslim v.1 p.227*]

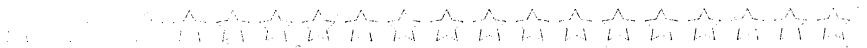
The translation of the verse accommodates the last mentioned interpretation of the word 'ribāt.'

The fourth advice tendered by the verse is the fear of Allāh piety *(Taqwa)*. This instruction is oft repeated in the Qur'ān. Piety *(Taqwa)* is that quality whereby a person cames out every good and abstains from all sin.

"...so that you may be successful." By practising all of these actions, a person shall attain the real success of the Hereafter.

Lesson: Once Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه spent the night with his maternal aunt, Sayyidah Maymuna رضى الله عنها, who was the wife of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. His purpose was to observe the Tahajjud Salāh of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He narrates that when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم awoke at night, he recited the concluding verses of Surah Āl Imrān viz, from verse 190: *"Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and day are signs for those who have intelligence... (till the end of the Surah)."* [*Bukhari v.2 p.657, Muslim v.1 p.261*]

Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه narrates that the person who recites the concluding verses of Surah Āl Imrān at night shall receive the reward of performing Salāh the entire night. [*Dārmi v.2 p.225*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the person who recites Surah Āl Imrān is indeed wealthy. According to another tradition he said that this Surah is the treasure of a poor person when he recites it in the Tahajjud Salāh [*Dārmi v.2 p.225*].

سورة النسآء

Madinan	Surah An-Nisa	Verses 176

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿1﴾ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ بِٱلطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ﴿2﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) O mankind, fear your Lord Who created you from a single soul, created therefrom its spouse, and spread from the two, multitudes of men and women. Fear that Allāh by Whom you ask of each other and (be wary of) family ties. Verily Allāh is Vigilant over you. (2) Give to the orphans their wealth and do not exchange the bad for the good. Do not devour their wealth by mingling it with your own. It is indeed a great sin to do so.

THE CREATION OF MAN AND THE PROHIBITION AGAINST DEVOURING THE WEALTH OF ORPHANS

The first instruction issued in this verse is to fear Allāh. This is often repeated in the Qur'ān since it is the key to success. Sins destroy a person's worldly life as well as his life in the Hereafter. Therefore, when the fear of Allāh grips one's heart, committing sins becomes extremely difficult for him.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him thus, "Adopt the fear of Allāh, for surely all your actions shall be beautified thereby." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p.4 15*]

Thereafter, an outstanding quality of Allāh is mentioned viz, that He is the One *"who created you from a single soul, created therefrom its spouse, and spread from the two, multitudes of men and women."* The "single soul" referred to here is Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام.

THE CREATION OF SAYYIDAH HAWWA عليها السلام

The *"spouse"* referred to in the verse is Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام, whom Allāh created from Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. In a narration of Muslim (*v.1 p.475*), Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed women have been created from a rib. She can never remain straight upon a thing. If you wish to derive any benefit from her, you will have to do so notwithstanding her inherent crookedness, for, if you attempt to straighten her, you will break her. To break her means to divorce her." A similar narration appears in Bukhari (*v.2 p.779*). From these traditions it is established that Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام was created from the rib of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام.

At this juncture many people, who allow their common sense to precede their conviction in the Qur'ān and Hadith, have fallen into the error of denying the creation of Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام from the rib of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. The concept does not appeal to their minds since they have no regard for the Ahādīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. (May Allāh guide them!)

"........and spread from the two, multitudes of men and women."

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that 20 males and 20 females were born of Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwa عليها السلام. From these the entire mankind was born. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v.2 p.1 16*]

In these verses, Allāh makes mention of His ability to create and also refers to His quality of nurturing (*being the Lord*). Therefore, Allāh did not only halt at the creation of man, but thereafter also saw to his every need by caring for him throughout his life. It is compulsory that man shows gratitude to Allāh for all of these bounties, and a great form of gratitude is that a person refrain from being disobedient to Allāh. The wealth and children granted by Allāh should not be used in a manner that displeases Him.

The verse instructs people to adopt piety *(Taqwa)* and also furnishes the reason for this noble trait. The person who recognises that Allāh has created him and continues to nurture him shall undoubtedly inculcate piety *(Taqwa)* in his heart.

"Fear that Allāh by Whom you ask of each other..." When asking their dues from others, people tend to use the name of Allāh. They tell each other that they should fear Allāh and hand over what is due from them. Besides this, people also ask other things using Allāh's name. They sometimes exhort someone to do some work for them in Allāh's name, or give them something in His name. Because work is accomplished in His name, it is only right that they people fear none but Him.

THE INSTRUCTION TO JOIN FAMILY TIES AND THE CONSEQUENCE OF SEVERING THEM

"..... and (be wary of) family ties." Maintenance of cordial family ties was emphasised amongst the Arabs even prior to the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They would even take oaths to remind each other of this responsibility. They used say, "I swear by the maintenance of family ties that you should show

regard for me, and not sever these ties!" The verse reminds man of these oaths, telling them not to forget that these ties always be maintained.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "He who desires that his sustenance be increased and that he live a longer life should preserve cordial ties with his family." [*Bukhari v.1 p.885*]

To associate and call upon one's relatives (in a manner conforming to the Shari'ah) is included in the purport of joining ties and holds great virtue.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abi Awfa رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The mercy of Allāh does not descend upon a community wherein any person severs family ties. [*"Mishkātul Masābih" v.2 p.420*]

In another hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the person who severs family ties shall never enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. In a narration of Abu Dawūd, it is narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم quotes Allāh as saying, "I am Allāh and I am the Most Merciful (Rahmān). I have extracted the word "Rahim" (family ties) from My attribute. I shall join with Me the person who joins family ties, and I shall sever ties with the one who severs his family ties." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" v.2 p.420*]

In these times, the sin of severing family ties has become so common that even those people who are regular with their Salāh and Tahajjud are guilty of it. Some take offence at their sisters' frequenting their home, while some dislike their uncles. There are also those who do not maintain a healthy relationship with their parents! Today, people often foster good relations with others, but have no time for their own relatives. They sever ties at the slightest provocation, whereas Belief *(Imān)* demands that a person maintain cordial relations at all times.

One should always endeavour to overlook the faults of others and never let the great virtue of joining family ties escape one's grasp. Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه narrates that he once met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and, grasping hold of his hand, requested to be informed of a most virtuous action. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Oh Uqba, join ties with those who sever them with you. Be generous to those who deprive you, and ignore those who oppress you." According to another report, it is mentioned, "Pardon those who oppress you." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.3 p.342*]

The person who holds the opinion that he need not join ties with those who sever them with him, is merely a vengeful person. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The joiner of family ties is not the one who is vengeful, but the joiner of ties is he who joins despite others severing them with him." [*Bukhari v.2 p.886*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should be hospitable to his guests. The person who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should join family ties. The person who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should speak a good word or remain silent." [*Bukhari v.2 p.889*]

"Verily Allāh is Vigilant over you." No action, good or bad is hidden from

Allāh, and He shall confer the full retribution therefore. This is a repetition of piety *(Taqwa)* in different words. It is an integral aspect of Belief *(Imān)* that a person realises that his Creator and Master, Allāh is Aware of his every action, whether it be private or public.

THREE ORDERS CONCERNING THE WEALTH OF ORPHANS

The guardians of orphans are now addressed. They are advised to *"Give to the orphans their wealth and do not exchange the bad (wealth) for the good. Do not devour their wealth by mingling it with your own."*

There are three facets alluded to in this verse. The first is that the guardian should safeguard any wealth belonging to the orphan in his trust, till the child reached puberty. These include all funds that the orphan may have inherited or whatever was given to the child as a gift. It should not be that the child is deprived of his/her wealth upon reaching puberty.

A narration in "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.136*) tells that a person from the tribe of Bani Ghitfān refused to hand over the wealth of his ward (who was his brother's son) when the latter demanded it upon coming of age. Consequently the two came with the issue to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whereupon the above verse was revealed. Upon hearing the verse, the uncle said, "We obey the command of Allāh and seek refuge from the great sin." He then handed the wealth over to his nephew.

The second injunction is not to exchange the precious wealth with that which is inferior. This means that the guardian must not seize some valuable commodity of the orphan's and substitute it with something of lesser value. People generally do this for the benefit of their own children. If the orphan possesses some property or anything of value, the guardians take these for their own children, replacing that of the orphan's with something inferior.

Other commentators nave interpreted the verse to mean that people should not shove aside their personal Lawful *(Halāl)* wealth to devour the wealth of their orphan wards. This will constitute substituting something lawful (good) for something unlawful (bad). Since the substitution of a person's inferior wealth for the superior wealth of an orphan is forbidden, devouring their wealth without substituting it with something else will most surely be forbidden as well.

The third instruction is that the custodian of the child should not mix his wealth with that of the orphan. People who have devious minds usurp the wealth of orphans by mixing their wealth together, using various schemes. Some do so absentmindedly without intending to misappropriate their wealth. They join the wealth of the orphans when purchasing household necessities, and fail to accurately calculate how much is spent from the orphan's wealth.

Lesson: With regard to preparing the food of orphans together with that of the rest of the family, Surah Baqarah has explained the ruling. This can be referred to under the discussion of the verse, *"They ask you concerning the orphans."* (*Surah 2, verse 220*)

Allāh then declares with regard to the misappropriation of the orphan's wealth, *"It is indeed a great sin to do so."* Although any form of misappropriation is

a sin, this verse emphasises the sinfulness of usurping the wealth of orphans. The verse not only declares it a sin, but a severe one indeed. Those guilty of this misdeed should recite this verse continuously and seriously reflect.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا ﴿٣﴾

(3) If you fear that you will not be able to be just to the orphans, then marry those women you are pleased with, two, three of four. If you fear that you will be unable to be impartial, then just one, or those slaves that are in your possession. In this way it is more unlikely that you will be unjust.

ADVICE REGARDING MARRIAGE TO ORPHANS

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v.2 p. 118*) narrates from Bukhari and other books, that Sayyidina Urwa bin Zubair رضى الله عنه asked his aunt Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها concerning this verse. She replied, "O my nephew, this verse refers to those orphaned girls whose inheritance from their fathers are mixed with the wealth of their guardians. It is obligatory that it be distributed."

It then occurs that this guardian, being impressed by her wealth or beauty, may decide to wed her. Since she is brought up in his home, he does not give her the dowry that is rightfully due to her. The verse instructed that they not be deprived of their rightful dowry, but, in fact, they should be given even more than this. [*Bukhari v.2 p.772*]

The verse then goes on to say that if people feel they shall be unable to be just when wedding these orphan girls, they should rather marry some other women. These women may stipulate whatever dowry they choose since they are not under the influence of another. However, the person who feels he will be able to give the orphaned girl her just due, may marry her.

"Durrul Manthūr" narrates from Ibn Jarīr and others the statement of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها wherein she says that there are certain orphaned girls who are wealthy. Being attracted by her wealth, the guardian marries her. Since he was never interested in the girl herself, he then neglects her and does not deal with her properly. This verse refers to such people as well.

PERMISSION TO MARRY FOUR WOMEN AND BEHAVE JUSTLY TOWARDS THEM

"..... marry those women you are pleased with, two, three of four. If you fear that you will be unable to be impartial, then just one, or those slaves that are in your possession."

This verse contains the permission to marry more than one woman at the same time. This is neither obligatory *(Fardh)* nor compulsory *(Wājib)*, but merely permissible provided the person is able to be just with all of his wives. He will, of course, not be responsible if he cannot have the same love for each wife because this is something he has no control over. However, with regard to everything

else wherein he has control, he must be impartial.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "The person who has two wives, but is not just between them, shall appear on the Day of Judgment in such a condition that one half of his body will be collapsing." (He has to spend an equal number of nights with each of his wives, as he decides to.) [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p.279*]

There are many people who marry a second wife merely because of their affluence, or just for the pleasure of it. Others do so because of the woman's wealth or because their first wife has now aged. They then deal most unjustly with their wives and even oppress them.

"In this way it is more unlikely that you will be unjust." If people conduct their marriages according to the injunctions of the Shari'ah, they will be saved from committing injustice.

Lesson: The Shari'ah of Islām permits marriage to a maximum of four women at one time. However, this permission is bound with the condition of equality. Other religions do not grant this concession to man. They, however, permit men to have mistresses whereby adultery has swept into vogue. They see no fault in perpetrating adultery, yet look down on marriage!

Many people revile Islām on the basis of the permission to marry many wives. At the outset they fail to understand that this is merely the granting of permission and not a binding obligation. Then they do not perceive the practical necessity for this permission. Firstly, it serves to increase the solace and mental well being of the person. The second great benefit is that when the numbers of men are radically decreased (for example, during the occasion of Jihād *(religion war)* when many men are martyred), widows are offered new homes and the opportunity to protect their virtue.

There are also times (as it occurs today) that women are in the majority. During these times women are allowed to share husbands so that they are not compelled to live their lives in sin. They are afforded the opportunity to live their lives chastely as wives and mothers. Those who are too myopic to perceive the depths of matters cannot understand this wisdom, and therefore resort to raising objections. Especially when the Shari'ah stipulates the condition of justice and equality between wives, a person has no scope to object.

Lesson: There are many other conditions attached to the marriage of several wives. Amongst these are that a person may not wed a woman who is still observing her Iddah *(the probationary period for divorced women and widows).* He may also not marry two sisters at the same time, nor any woman from amongst his Mahārim (those to whom marriage is totally forbidden).

Should a person marry a fifth wife whilst still in the marriage of the other four, the fifth marriage will not be valid and the woman will not be considered to be his wife. During the period of ignorance, there was no restriction on the number of wives and people had many.

When Sayyidina Ghaylan bin Salma Thaqafi رضی اللہ عنہ became a Muslim he had ten wives the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم told him to keep four and divorce

the rest. [*Ibn Majah*]

PERMISSION TO COHABIT WITH SLAVE WOMEN

The verse explains that if a person is unable to deal justly with four wives, he should suffice with one. If he is not able to do even this, he should resort to his slave women. While a man may lawfully cohabit with his slave women, they do not share the same rights as wives do. Although he has to feed and clothe them, he need not distribute his nights with them equally.

The disbeliever *(kāfir)* women who were captured during Jihād *(religion war)* were distributed amongst the Mujāhidīn and became their slaves. It is permissible for men to cohabit with their slave women. There are many conditions attached to this, as may be referred to in the books of jurisprudence.

The offspring of slave women are regarded to be the legal children of their masters and are considered to be free people. When the master dies, the slave mother of his children also becomes free. Detailed rules can be found in the books of jurisprudence.

THE WISDOM BEHIND ENSLAVING DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* CAPTIVES

During Jihād *(religion war)*, many men and women become war captives. The Amīrul Mu'minīn has the choice of distributing them amongst the Mujāhidīn, in which event they will become the property of these Mujāhidīn. This enslavement is the penalty for disbelief (kufr). The advantage to them is that they will now be exposed to the Islāmic way of life, whereby they shall be afforded the opportunity to grow accustomed to it. By experiencing the adhān *(call to the prayer)*, Salāh and other devotional acts of Islām, they will be drawn to accept, thereby saving themselves from the eternal chastisement of the Hereafter.

The advantage to the Islāmic state is that this practice will weaken the enemy, presenting less danger of an uprising. The state will also be absolved of the responsibility of caring for these prisoners, thus conserving the state coffers.

If they are confined in prisons, they present the danger of leasing with their countries to attack the Muslims once more. As slaves, they will be of service to their Mujāhidīn masters who will not even feel it a burden to care for them because of their services.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "Those slaves you are satisfied with should be fed as you are fed and clothed as you are clothed. Those with whom you are dissatisfied should be sold, for you should not punish the servants of Allāh!" [*"Mishkātul Masābīh" p.292 from Abu Dawūd and Ahmad*] The inference made is that when a person is not satisfied with his slave, he would beat him excessively and neglect to care for him properly. If he is sold, he may be able to serve someone else better.

When a slave is fed and clothed like the members of the household, and he is treated cordially like one of them, he will cease to consider himself a stranger. In this way he will steadily grow to accept Islām. History bears testimony to the fact that many notable Muhaddithīn were children of slaves.

The Ahādīth are replete with detailed guidelines for the congenial relationship with slaves. On his deathbed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stressed that people give due regard to their Salāh and their slaves. [*Ahmad v.3 p.817*]

This is the slavery that the ignorant people of Europe seek to discredit and object to!

Lesson: None of the injunctions pertaining to slavery have been abrogated in the Shari'ah. The reason that the Muslims of today do not have slaves is because they do not engage in Jihād *(religion war)*. Their wars are fought by the instruction of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and are halted by the same felons. The Muslim have also been shackled by such treaties of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* whereby they cannot enslave anyone in the event of a war.

Muslims have been denied a great boon whereby every home could have had a slave. May Allāh grant the Muslims the ability to escape the tentacles of the enemy, remain steadfast upon the Dīn *(religion)* and engage in Jihād *(religion war)* according to the injunctions of Shari'ah. Āmīn!

SERVANTS ARE NOT SLAVES AND CANNOT BE COHABITED WITH, NEITHER CAN FREE PEOPLE BE SOLD

The only slaves with whom sexual relations can be maintained are those who were captured in Jihād *(religion war)* and distributed amongst the Mujāhidīn. Besides this, there is no other way in which a person may be made a slave. The women employed in homes for domestic chores are not slaves and it will be necessary to observe viel *(Hijāb)* from them (i.e. they should be concealed from men).

It is Unlawful *(Harām)* to engage in sexual contact with them just as it is Unlawful *(Harām)* to do so with any other woman. It should be understood that deriving sexual gratification from them is no less than adultery!

If the parents of a girl sell ,her as a slave, she will not be a slave. In the same way, if she sells herself as a slave she will not become one. Cohabitation with her will be adultery.

THE TYPE OF WOMAN ONE SHOULD MARRY

The verse says, *marry those women you are pleased with...* "This refers to those women whom a person deems to be the best and most suitable for him. The criteria for this may be beauty, wealth, character, piety, and many more qualities. The verse makes it evident that there is nothing wrong selecting a woman of one's choice, irrespective of the criteria used. However, preference should be given to piety. A narration of Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reads, "A woman is married for four reasons; for her wealth, her lineage, her beauty and her piety. So (O listener!), be successful by choosing her who is pious! May Allāh grant you prosperity!" [*Muslim v.1 p.473*]

According to another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The entire world is full of objects of benefit, and the best of these is the pious wife." [*Muslim v.1 p.475*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

said, "The best of women who mount camels (Arab women) are those women of the Quraish who are compassionate unto their children and protective of the wealth of their husbands." [*Bukhari v.2 p.7 60*]

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "After piety *(Taqwa)*, there is no boon a person can acquire better than a pious wife." He then described the traits of a pious wife thus;

(1) She obeys when instructed.

(2) The husband is pleased to look at her

(3) She helps to fulfill his oaths (e.g. She fulfills a task that he, on oath, commands her to do)

(4) She protects his wealth and her chastity in his absence [Ibn Majah p.133].

Just as the piety of a woman is given paramount importance at the time of marriage, so too must due importance be given to the piety of a man who proposes to a woman.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "A woman should be given in marriage upon the proposal of such a man whom you know is of pious and upright character. If you fail to do so, widespread corruption shall reign on earth." [*Tirmidhi p.207*]

MARRIAGE IS A REQUIREMENT OF THE SHARI'AH

Marriage is an instinctive necessity of man. Allāh has created man desirous of woman and vice versa. Allāh has ordained the institution of marriage *(Nikah)* to fulfill this natural instinct of man and to safeguard his chastity and gazes. In the opening hadith of the chapter of Nikah, Tirmidhi narrates a hadith on the authority of Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه. He reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Four things were from the observances of the Prophet علیه السلام viz. (1) Modesty, (2) Applying perfume, (3) Brushing the teeth with the Miswāk and, (4) Nikah."

There is no piety in abstaining from Nikah the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, 'O youth, those of you who can afford to marry should do so, for marriage is a means of lowering the gaze and protecting the chastity. Those who cannot afford to marry should stick to fasting, for it subdues the carnal desires." [*Bukhari v.2 p.758*]

There is no permission to discharge the sexual passions except within wedlock. The person unable to marry should fast according to necessity so that his passions may be kept in check.

To control these desires, certain Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم requested the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم for permission to castrate themselves. The Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "The person who castrates another and the one who has himself castrated is not from us. The castration of my Ummah lies in fasting." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" pg.690.*]

In marriage a man, tired after a hard day's work, finds solace and succour in his wife at home. This is referred to in the verse of Surah A'rāf where Allāh says, *"So that he may find comfort in her"* [*Surah 7, verse 189*].

The Muslim wife is absolved of the burden of earning a livelihood, protecting her chastity by remaining at home. Both the husband and the wife are given due consideration in the Shari'ah and the rights of each are guarded.

Husband and wife soon become parents. They then take pride in raising their children, paying much attention to their nurturing. By directing their children towards Dīn *(religion)* and the knowledge of Dīn *(religion)*, they secure for themselves elevated positions in the Hereafter.

Islām coincides with the natural instincts of man and does not venture to destroy these. Within reasonable bounds, Islām allows man to fulfill these inclinations, provided that he abides by the injunctions of Shari'ah.

وَءَاتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَٰتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۚ فَإِن طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَن شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيٓـًٔا مَّرِيٓـًٔا ﴿٤﴾

(4) Give women their dowries kindly. If they, of their own accord, remit a part thereof, then partake of it with welcome and happiness.

THE INSTRUCTION TO PAY THE DOWER

In consideration of women, the Shari'ah has stipulated the payment of dower (*called "mahr"*). The man has to pay to the woman a sum that she agrees to and he may not force her to accept what he wishes to give. As long as he does not pay her, he shall remain indebted to her for the fixed amount. If she, out of her own free will, chooses to absolve him of the amount, or a part thereof, she is at liberty to do so.

The condition is that she do so willingly. If she is forced to do so, or is tricked into signing a document to that effect, the husband will still be liable to pay her although she can make no legal claim in a court of law. Allāh shall require the husband to account for it on the inevitable Day of Judgment.

ONLY THAT REMISSION IS ACCEPTABLE WHICH DONE OF THE WIFE'S FREE WILL

The husband can never consider himself absolved of paying the dowry unless the wife rents the same without duress. The verse stipulates that she had to do so with the happiness of the heart and not the mind. When a person sits down to think and deliberate upon a situation, the pros and cons are evaluated. For example, if a person contemplates giving a bribe, he determines that by giving twenty Rands as a bribe, he will save a hundred Rands. Although the thought appeals to the mind, the soul and heart do not want to accept.

When a person requests his wife to remit the Mahr, she understands that by complying she will be depriving herself from a fortune, which she could utilise at her liberty. On the other hand, the fear does not vacate her mind that should she refuse to remit it, her husband may divorce her in anger. Then, she thinks, how

long will she be forced to be a burden upon her parents and relatives? Weighing up the situation in these terms, she then opts to forgo the Mahr, even though her heart does not concede to the deal.

This form of reluctant authorisation is not acceptable in the Shari'ah. Duress does not necessarily mean that a gun is held to the head, but it takes many forms, the above being one of them. In this case, it will be Unlawful *(Harām)*for the husband to withhold the dowry *(Mahr).*

A blanket rule is outlined in a hadith wherein the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "Beware not to oppress! Lo! The wealth of another is only permissible with the happiness of his heart." [*"Mishkātul Masābih" pg.255*]

Many people give money out of regard for others and do not refuse because of some degree of duress. It is not allowed to consider this wealth lawful and to accept it. Some people take the property of others in jest and then do not return it. This is also Unlawful *(Harām)* due to the unhappiness of the owner. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "None of you should take the cane of his brother, pretending to be joking, yet earnest in the effort. Whosoever takes the cane of his brother should return it." (The example of a cane was used to indicate that even seemingly insignificant things should not be misappropriated). [*"Mishkātul Masābih" p.255*]

".....then partake of it with welcome and happiness." This indicates that whatever is given out of the satisfaction of the heart is blessed, fulfillling and pleasing. This is contrary to anything derived without consent, which will be bereft of blessings and pleasure.

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴿5﴾ وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَٰمَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ ءَانَسْتُم مِّنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكْبَرُوا وَمَن كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَن كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فَأَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿6﴾

(5) Do not give the foolish ones your wealth which Allāh has made you custodians over, but feed and clothe them thereof and speak kind words to them. (6) Test the orphans till they are capable of marriage. If you notice that they understand, then hand over their wealth to them. Do not consume their wealth in extravagance and in haste, fearing that they grow up. Whoever is wealthy should abstain and whoever is poor should eat thereof within reason. When you eventually hand over their wealth to them, then have witnesses preside over them. Allāh Suffices to take account.

SOME ADVICE CONCERNING THE WEALTH OF ORPHANS

The *'foolish ones"* referred to in the first of these verse are the juvenile

orphans. They should only be given their wealth when they reach the age of puberty. Then too, it should not be given to them until they are of sound Judgment and understanding. If it is determined that they, after reaching puberty, still retain childish mentality, their wealth should remain in the custody of the guardian. Their expenses should be paid from this wealth and should they take exception to this state of affairs, it must be kindly explained to them that this is for their own welfare.

The verse mentions *"your wealth"* instead of "their wealth." This is mentioned to impress upon the mind of the guardian that he should safeguard the wealth of the orphan as if it were his own. He should not embezzle the funds, nor squander it in any way. It also emphasises the fact that the wealth should be protected to the extent that the guardian does not hand it over to the orphan himself until he is able to manage it properly.

Another factor worth mentioning is that Allāh used the word "qiyāman" to describe the custodianship of the guardian over the wealth of the orphan. This word also refers to 'one who maintains' and 'one who stands.' This alludes to the fact that wealth is a means of allowing a person to be able to maintain a good standard of living and a means of standing firm in this world. The person whom Allāh grants wealth should value it and not squander it on himself and his family. Wastage of wealth is Unlawful *(Harām)*.

Sayyidina Mughira bin Shu'ba رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله عليه وسلم said, "Undoubtedly Allāh has forbidden harming or hurting mothers, burying daughters alive (as was practiced by the idolaters), denying the right of the rightful and demanding from those upon whom one has no rights. Allāh also dislikes chit chat, excessive questioning and wasting of money." [*Bukhari v.1 p.324*]

The verse then instructs the guardians to test the mental capabilities of the orphan when s/he comes of age. Their wealth should only be given to them if they are able to manage it efficiently and wisely and will not waste it.

The third injunction mentioned in the verse is that the wealth of the orphans should not be squandered in wasteful pursuits. It should also not be squandered in haste with the intention that the child will soon become of age, whereafter s/he shall demand their wealth. With this in mind, many a guardian quickly spends the wealth on himself and his children.

The fourth instruction is that the guardians safeguard the orphan's wealth and not spend it upon themselves unnecessarily. The one who is wealthy should abstain from it completely and the one who is poor may use only what is absolutely necessary.

In this regard Allāma Ālusi رحمة الله عليه, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" *(v.4 p.208)* quotes four opinions. The first is that this verse applied initially, but was subsequently abrogated by the verse, *"indeed those who oppressively consume the wealth of orphans, they only consume fire in their bellies."* (*Surah Nisā verse 10*) This is the opinion of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه.

The second opinion is that of Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Abul Ālia رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Ubaidah Salmāni رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Muhammad Bāqir رحمة الله عليه. They maintain that the poor

guardian may borrow funds from the orphan's wealth. This will have to be paid back when the guardian is able to do so.

The third opinion is that the poor guardian may take a wage from the wealth of the orphan in remuneration for his services to the child. This wage has to be reasonable and not excessive. An example of this is the orphan whose father has left for him many properties, businesses, houses, plantations, etc. It is obvious that a considerable amount of the guardian's time and effort will be spent in managing all these assets. He may, therefore, extract a salary for his services as manager.

His salary should be stipulated, keeping in mind the orphan's welfare. He should not take more than what will be paid to the average person for the same job. If he is required to travel for the purpose of this management, he should be conservative in spending and not waste the money in expensive hotels and restaurants. The rule is that he should desire for the orphan what he desires for himself.

The fifth injunction is that witnesses be called when the wealth of the orphan is handed over to him/her. The obvious advantage of this is that the child cannot claim later that his/her wealth was not given. The precise amount being handed over should be made known to the witnesses so that they may resolve any dispute that may arise in later years.

"Allāh Suffices to take account." This verse is indeed very concise since it serves to address the guardian who does not keep proper account of the orphan's wealth, as well as those who wish to bribe court officials to win their favour. Those people should also heed this verse who refuse to give the orphan their full due when they come of age.

These people should not rest content that the paperwork of this world is in order. They will definitely be required to render account on the inevitable Day of Judgment.

Lesson: The verse stipulates that orphans should first reach the age of maturity before their wealth is handed over to them. A boy will have reached maturity when he experiences a wet dream or ejaculates. A girl will be considered to have matured when she menstruates, experiences a wet dream, or falls pregnant. If none of these things occur, each of them shall be deemed to be mature when they reach the age of 15 according to the Islāmic lunar calendar. This is the presiding verdict of the Muftis.

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿٧﴾

(7) For men is a part of what the parents and relatives leave behind, and for women is a part of what the parents and relatives leave behind; be it a little or a lot. This share has been fixed.

THE SHARES OF MEN AND WOMEN ARE STIPULATED

This verse emphasises the importance of applying the laws of inheritance, underlining the need to apportion to men and women their allotted shares. The members of each gender have to be given their due shares from the estate of their parents and other relatives.

During the period of ignorance, women were deprived of any inheritance and even today there are many nations who do the same. It is common that only those people receive inheritance who are in control of the estate at the time of the death. Even if others have to be given, the wives and daughters are ignored. When the deceased leaves two wives and their respective children, the children in charge of the estate do not share the inheritance with their stepmother and her children.

People even deprive orphans of their rightful share and pay no heed to the injunctions of the Shari'ah in this regard. They give due importance to Salāh and other acts of devotion, yet are negligent of one of the most fundamental and binding laws of Islām . those of "Mirāth" *(inheritance)*. The verse makes it clear that just as men and women receive an allotted portion from the estate of their deceased parents, they are also entitled to a part of the estate of various relatives. The details of these can be referred to in the books of jurisprudence.

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ ٱلْقِسْمَةَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينُ فَٱرْزُقُوهُم مِّنْهُ وَقُولُوا۟
لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٨﴾ وَلْيَخْشَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكُوا۟ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَـٰفًا خَافُوا۟
عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَٰلَ
ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِى بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا ۖ وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾

(8) When the relatives, orphans and needy present themselves upon the occasion of distribution (of the estate), then apportion some of it to them and speak kindly to them. (9) Let those fear who leave behind them weak offspring regarding whom they are concerned. They should fear Allāh and speak justly. (10) Indeed those who oppressively consume the wealth of orphans, they only consume fire in their bellies. Very soon they shall enter the Blaze!

A STERN WARNING AGAINST CONSUMING THE WEALTH OF ORPHANS AND THE ORDER TO SAFEGUARD THEIR WEALTH

It often happens that at the time when an estate is being distributed amongst the rightful heirs, certain other relatives, orphans and needy people also present themselves with a view to receiving something. When this does happen, some of the mature heirs should give them something from their own shares and kindly explain to them that they are not entitled to any shares. Only those people allotted shares by Allāh are to receive anything, and they should be pleased with what Allāh has decreed.

Thereafter, those who are responsible for the executing of the estate are addressed. Allāh tells them that they should hasten to distribute the shares to all the heirs and beneficiaries since amongst these there may be weak and needy people. If the distribution is delayed, these people could suffer. Therefore, they should think that if it were their estate being dissolved and their feeble heirs were not given their dues timeously, what will become of them? By placing themselves in the same situation, they will become more concerned to ensure that they fulfill their task quickly.

They should fear Allāh and distribute the estate correctly, ensuring that the shares of minor heirs are placed in the custody of such people who will care properly for the child and keep their wealth safely. They should be such people who will pacify the minor heirs practically (by giving them their wealth upon maturity) as well as verbally (by being kind and gentle in their behaviour towards them).

Allāh then announces that those who unlawfully usurp the wealth of orphans should rest assured that their actions will not pass undetected. Indeed the consequences shall be grievous on the Day of Judgment, when rendering account for devious actions will not be easy.

In this world, the innocent child may not be able to tell the guardian anything, but in the Hereafter, the unjust guardian will be subjected to the most gruesome torture on account of his oppression. Although it seems that he is eating sumptuous meals with his ill-gotten gains, in reality he is only filling his belly with the smouldering coals of Hell.

Those people who deprive orphans of their wealth during the distribution of an estate should ponder over this verse. There are others who are just as guilty when they collect funds to run orphanages and then spend most of the money on themselves. When legacies are not suitably settled, the wealth of many an orphan is devoured by others who are not in the least concerned about the consequences.

يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَوْلَٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَآءً فَوْقَ
ٱثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۖ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَٰحِدَةً فَلَهَا ٱلنِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ
مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُۥٓ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ
ٱلثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُۥٓ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِى بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ
ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾

(11) Allāh instructs you with regard to your children. For a male is the like share of two females. If the daughters are more than two, they shall inherit two-thirds of what the deceased leaves. If there is only one daughter, she shall inherit half.

For each of the parents is a sixth of what the deceased leaves if he had children. If he did not have any children and his parents are his only heirs, then the mother inherits a third. If he has brothers then his mother shall inherit a sixth (of the estate) after apportioning the bequest he made and (after) settling his debts. From your father and sons you know not which of them is closer to you in benefit. These are obligatory shares from Allāh, surely Allāh is all knowing all wise.

DETAILS OF THE SHARES OF INHERITANCE

This verse and those to follow explain the details of inheritance. More is still to come in the concluding verse of this Surah as well. The above verse elucidates the shares of the children and parents. Allāh opens the verse with the declaration, *"Allāh instructs you with regard to your children."* This emphasises the fact that the shares of heirs are fixed by Allāh Himself. Neither the deceased person nor any government has an option in the matter. Any legislation in this matter that conflicts with that of the Qur'ān will be considered to be null and void.

Thereafter Allāh says, *"For a male is the like share of two females."* This means that sons shall receive the equivalent of two daughters.

The following laws are derived from the above verses:

1. *If only two daughters and a son (no parents and no spouse survive the deceased then the estate will be divided into four portions. 'Two quarters (half) will be given to the son and the daughters will receive a quarter each.*

2. *If in the above situation either of the parents or a spouse survive the deceased as well, they will be given their shares first. Thereafter the son and daughters will be allotted their portions accruing to the principle of "For a male is the like share of two females."*

3. *If only one daughter survived the deceased, she will inherit half of his entire estate (the remaining half will be distributed amongst the other heirs according to the appropriate laws).*

4. *If only two or more daughters survive the deceased (no sons), they will share two-thirds of the estate. (Therefore each of the two daughters in the above example shall receive a third of the estate and the remaining portion will be distributed amongst the other surviving heirs).*

5. *If the deceased is survived by both his parents as well as children (even if they be one son and one daughter), then each of the parents shall inherit one sixth. The remaining portion will be given to the children according to the aforementioned laws.*

6. *If the only heirs are the parents the mother shall inherit a third*

and the father, the remaining two thirds.

7. *If the deceased is survived only by his parents and several brothers and sisters (be they real or consanguine), then the mother shall receive one sixth. 'The remaining portion will be the lot of the father (the brothers and sisters will not receive anything). 'The only difference that the presence of brothers and sisters will effect is that they will decrease the share of the mother from a third to a sixth.*

8. *If the deceased is only survived by his parents and a single brother or a single daughter, then the share of the mother will not be affected. She will still inherit a third of the estate. The remaining two thirds will be for the father.*

"From your father and sons you know not which of them is closer to you in benefit." A person never knows whether it is his ascendants or his descendants who have benefited him more. If apportioning shares was left to people, they would allot a greater share to those of their relatives who have been more useful to them.

It may occur that a person feels that certain of his relatives shall be of greater benefit to him, whereas they never pass any benefit to him. He will, therefore, fix a larger share for them whereas others may be more deserving.

The criteria for shares were thus not based upon the benefit an heir may have passed on to the testator, but Allāh had fixed the shares based upon kinship. These shares were stipulated by Allāh Himself and none may alter them in any way. No heirs may be given less than their allotted shares, nor may any of them be deprived of their rights. Allāh is the All Knowing and the All Wise. His decrees are replete with wisdom.

Lesson 1: Some people, on the grounds of disobedience, disinherit their children. This practice is Unlawful *(Harām)* and their instruction for disinheritance will be ignored in terms of the Shari'ah. The child will still receive his/her share since the criterion for inheritance is not whether the child was of service to the parent or not. A person shall receive his/her share purely upon the grounds of being the child of the deceased,

Lesson 2: Allāh has fixed a share for all the children, be they male or female. The only difference is that daughters receive half the share of sons. One of the reasons for this is that women generally receive dowry from their husbands and do not bear the responsibility of providing for their families. This responsibility rests with their husbands. On the other hand, men have the task of paying dowry and providing for their families. For this reason, they are more in need of money than their sisters are.

IT IS UNLAWFUL *(HARĀM)* TO DEPRIVE WOMEN OF THEIR SHARES

This is indeed a severe sin perpetrated by many people who prefer to distribute the inheritance only amongst the sons, depriving the daughters completely. Even if an individual, a group, a society or a country grants shares

only to males, it will not be permissible for the males to take what should belong to their sisters according to the Shari'ah.

Allāh has specifically mentioned the share of females when He declared, *"For a male is the like share of two females."* Instead of mentioning the share of males Allāh attached the word "share" to females. This emphasises the importance of the share of females.

When the British ruled India, a Muslim came to a British magistrate requesting that his father's estate be dissolved according to British law. The magistrate admitted that he was constrained to accede to the request since he was a public servant, but he asked the Muslim why he did not want the matter to be resolved according to the Qur'ān? He added further that the Qur'ān discusses the shares of sons and daughters in less than one line. "Why do you," he asked, "accept one portion of the verse, *'For a male,'* and reject the other part, 'the like *share of two females.'* Is this the way to accept the Qur'ān?" The Muslim was speechless.

Some people say that their sisters do not want their shares, or that they have waived their shares. If they really waived their shares then there will be no objection, but if their reluctance to accept their shares was merely superficial, then the same shall apply as discussed in the verse, *"If they, of their own accord, remit a part thereof.."* (*Surah Nisā, verse* 4)

The sisters must be informed of their shares so that they know exactly what they are to receive. They should be enlightened about every portion of their share, be it from the business, cash, plantation, etc. It should be made clear to the sisters that their shares will be given to them if chose to accept. When these factors are made clear to them and they still opt to forgo their shares, their renouncement will be valid.

It may occur that she fears, by demanding her share, her brothers will become upset and (in the event of separation from her husband or his death) they will not be prepared to care for her. If she forgoes her share under these circumstances, her remission will not be deemed valid in the Shari'ah.

Lesson: The shares stipulated in the above verse will only be allotted *"after apportioning the bequest he made and (after) settling his debts."* This stresses the importance of first settling debts. The details of this will, Insha Allāh, be explained later.

۞ وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَٰجُكُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ
لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمُ ٱلرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْنَ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَآ أَوْ
دَيْنٍ ۚ وَلَهُنَّ ٱلرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ
لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ ٱلثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُم ۚ مِّنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَآ أَوْ
دَيْنٍ

(12) You shall inherit half of what your wives leave if they do not have children. If they have children, then you shall inherit a quarter of what they leave after apportioning the bequest she made and (after) settling her debts. They (your wives) shall inherit a quarter of what you leave if you have no children. If you have children, then they shall inherit an eighth of what you leave after apportioning the bequest you make and (after) settling your debts.

THE SHARES OF SPOUSES

The laws derived from the above verse are as follows:

1. *If a woman is survived only by her husband (she has absolutely no children, not from him nor from any previous marriages), he shall inherit half of her estate.*

2. *If she dies leaving behind children (be they one or more, from her present husband or from a former one), then the husband in whose wedlock she died shall receive a quarter of her estate.*

3. *If a man dies leaving behind only his wife (no children either from her or from a previous marriage), then she will receive a quarter of his estate as inheritance.*

4. *If he dies leaving children (be they one or more, from the present wife or from any others), then the wife in whose wedlock he died shall inherit one eighth of his estate. In all the above cases the shares will be allotted after the bequest and debts have been settled.*

Lesson: If a person dies leaving behind several wives, they all will have to share the quarter or eighth portion, according to their number.

وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَٰلَةً أَوِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُۥٓ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا
ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فِى ٱلثُّلُثِ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَآرٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

(12) (contd.) If a man or woman dies leaving neither any ascendants nor descendants, and s/he has a brother or a sister, then each of them shall inherit a sixth. If they (brothers and sisters) are more, then they shall all be partners in a third after apportioning the bequest that has been made and (after) settling any debts; without intending to cause any harm. This instruction is from Allāh, and Allāh is All Knowing, Clement.

THE SHARES OF UTERINE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The above verse discusses the share of the "Kalālah." This is that person who leaves no mother, no father, no grandfather, no son, no daughter and no grandchildren from their sons. If the "Kalālah" dies leaving behind real or consanguine brothers or sisters, then their shares are discussed in the final verse

of Surah Nisā viz. *"They ask you. Say 'Allāh shall reply to you with regard to the Kalālah."* [*Surah 4, verse 176*]

The above verse deals with the inheritance of that "Kalālah" who is survived by uterine brothers or sisters. If there is only one uterine brother and one uterine sister, then each shall receive a sixth of the estate as inheritance. If, however, there are several brothers and sisters, then they will have to share a third of the estate. In this case the shares of males and females will be equal and the remaining portion will be made over to the other heirs.

This will, of course, take place after the bequests and debts have been settled.

THE SHARES OF REAL AND CONSANGUINE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The real or consanguine sister who survives her Kalālah brother will be entitled to half of his estate. A brother who survives his real or consanguine sister will inherit all of her estate.

If there are two sisters (real or consanguine) surviving their Kalālah brother, then each will inherit a third of his estate. If they are more than two, they too will share two thirds.

If a man dies as a Kalālah and he leaves behind real or consanguine brothers and sisters, they will share his estate according to the principle of *"For a male is the like share of two females.* For example, if there are two sisters and one brother, the estate will be divided into four portions. The brother shall receive two quarters (half) and the sisters will receive a quarter each.

It should be well understood that the shares of the Kalālah's brothers and sisters are mentioned in two places of Surah Nisā. Those of his/her uterine brothers and sisters are mentioned in the above verse (12), while those of the real and consanguine brothers and sisters are stated in the concluding verse (176).

THE SHARES OF INHERITANCE ARE TO BE DISTRIBUTED AFTER APPORTIONING BEQUESTS SETTLING DEBTS

Every share stipulated thus far since the beginning of this discussion of inheritance has contained the clause of first settling the bequests and debts. The procedure after death is that firstly the burial expenses are to be paid from the estate. This is an obligatory duty. Thereafter the debts are to be paid. If the debts exhaust the entire estate, the bequests will be ignored and no heir shall receive any share.

DEBTS PRECEDE BEQUESTS

Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه has been reported to have said, "You people recite the verse, *'after apportioning the bequest you make and (after) settling your debts.'* (The sequence of this verse seems to denote that bequests precede debts in priority) However, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ruled that debts be settled before the bequest." [*Mishkāt p.263*]

BEQUESTS ARE PAID FROM A THIRD OF THE ESTATE

After the debts have been settled, bequests are paid from a third of th remaining wealth (if the bequest is legitimate). If the amount of the beques exceeds a third it will still be paid from the third only; unless the mature heir permit that the excess be paid from their shares. The permission of immatur heirs is not valid.

If the deceased had not bequeathed anything, then the heirs may be give their shares immediately upon settlement of the debts. If there were neither debt nor bequests, then the heirs may receive their shares from the total sum of th estate.

CERTAIN LAWS CONCERNING BEQUESTS

If a person wishes to donate some of his money to charity or desires to giv it to any person besides his heirs, he may bequeath this from one third of hi estate. It is best, though, that it should be even less than a third. It now become binding upon the heirs to ensure that this bequest is fulfilled. If they usurp thi wealth, they will be guilty of a great sin.

Some Scholars *(Ulama)* have explained that Allāh had mentioned th apportioning of the bequest before debts because the debtors will fight for thei dues. On the other hand, the apportioning of the bequest is at the mercy of th heirs. The Qur'ān therefore, emphasises the importance of bequests in this way so that the people dissolving the estate give it due regard.

Ruling: If the deceased bequeaths that the obligatory Hajj be made on hi behalf, then this will also be made from one third of his estate only. Fulfillmen of this Hajj (called "Hajj Badl") is also incumbent upon the heirs, failing whicl they shall be sinful. If the expenses of Hajj cannot be paid from the third, Ha should be made from such a place from where the expenses are less. In this way the funds should suffice.

Lesson: Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet لى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh will deprive that person of his legacy in Heaven *(Jannah)* wh deprives another of his inheritance." [*Ibn Majah p. 194*] This shall apply to sucl persons who tell rightful heirs that they will not be given their dues or delay payment till their death.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet لى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed a man or woman may live sixty years in the obedience o Allāh, but make such bequests whereby their heirs are harmed. Because of this the fire of Hell becomes compulsory for them." After quoting this hadith Sayyidina Abu Harairah رضی الله عنه recited the verse, "*after apportioning the beques that has been made and (after) settling any debts; without intending to cause any harm This instruction is from Allāh, and Allāh is All Knowing, Clement... (up to the words) That is the supreme success.*" [*Mishkāt p. 226*]

Ruling: It is not permissible to make a bequest in favour of an heir becaus the heirs have been apportioned their fixed shares and cannot receive more of th estate. However, this will be permitted if the other heirs consent to it.

SOME LAWS OF INHERITANCE

Ruling: A murderer will receive no inheritance from the estate of person whom he murdered.

Ruling: A disbeliever *(kāfir)* cannot be an heir to a Muslim, neither can a Muslim inherit from a disbeliever *(kāfir)*. This has been reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*Bukhari v.2 p. 1001*]

Lesson: Heirs can be categorised into three groups:

1. As'hābul Farāidh: Their shares have been stipulated in the Qur'ān (these have already been discussed).

2. Asabāt: They are entitled to whatever remains after the As'hābul Farāidh have taken their shares. e.g. If daughters and sons survive the deceased, their shares will be determined from whatever remains after apportioning the shares of the As'hābul Farāidh. The Asabāt consist of the father, paternal grandfather, brothers, paternal uncles and sons of these paternal uncles. These become the Asabāt in order of their proximity to the deceased. The details of this are extensive and can be found in the books of inheritance. After reading this brief treatise on the subject, no person should consider himself a Mufti. All rulings in this matter should proceed directly from the Muftis themselves. If there are no As'hābul Farāidh, the Asabāt will share the entire estate amongst themselves after the bequest and debts have been cleared.

3. **Dhawil Arhām:** These are the people who will only receive a share in the absence of the Asabāt. They include the children of daughters and sisters, daughters of brothers, and others. The details of these are also immense and can only be understood from a teacher who is well versed on the subject.

Ruling: When there are no Asabāt, some part of the estate may be left undistributed even after the As'hābul Farāidh receive their shares. In this case, the remaining wealth will be redistributed amongst the same people (As'hābul Farāidh). This is termed "radd." Radd will not be given to spouses.

Ruling: If the deceased had not yet paid his wife her dowry, she will be considered to be a creditor. She will first have to be paid the dowry, thereafter she will still be entitled to her stipulated share from the estate. Many people are guilty of the gross crime of depriving widows of their dowries and their share of inheritance. They will have to answer for this injustice on the Day of Judgment.

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿13﴾
وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُۥ
عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿14﴾

(13) These are the limits of Allāh. Whosoever obeys Allāh and His messenger, Allāh will enter him into gardens beneath which rivers flow; wherein they shall

abide forever. That is the supreme success. (14) Whoever disobeys Allāh and His messenger and transgresses His limits, Allāh shall enter him into a fire wherein he shall abide forever. His shall be a disgracing punishment.

THE ORDER AND TO OBEY ALLĀH AND HIS MESSENGER AND THE WARNING AGAINST DISOBEYING THEM

This verse explains that whatever injunctions were mentioned are the limits set by Allāh. Infringement of these will constitute rebellion against Allāh. Abiding by them shall earn the pleasure of Allāh and His bounties. The obedient person shall attain the everlasting abode of bounties, thereby achieving the ultimate success.

Then there are those who do not accept the Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh and make false claims to Islām. They are the ones who mock at the injunctions of the Shari'ah, falsify them, and propagate their own culture. Such people shall be subjected to the most torturous and debasing forms of punishment in the Hereafter and will never be able to escape from it. Even those who are Muslims but perpetrate sins will have to suffer temporary punishment.

Much has already been mentioned regarding the laws of inheritance, but still more has been left to be said. The following are some other general laws.

1. Some people say that if a son dies before his father, the share that the late son was to receive from the father's estate should be given to his (the late son's) sons. This statement is in conflict with the laws of the Shari'ah. The basis of inheritance is kinship. A grandson cannot inherit if his father (the son) is alive. As long as a person is alive, none has any right to his property. Since the father was still alive when the son died, he could have no claim to inheritance from his father. Therefore, his Sons (the grandsons) can also have no claim to what their father was supposed to inherit. It is only once a person dies that heirs become entitled to their shares in his estate. The grandsons will only be entitled to that part of their grandfather's estate which is their legal share as grandsons; that is if they are entitled to any shares at all.

2. It is a grave injustice to deprive daughters and widows of their inheritance.

3. It is common that people continue utilising the property of the deceased before distributing it. In this manner the wealth of orphans and children are also consumed illegally. Such people are, according to a previous verse, consuming the fire of Hell in their bellies.

4. Unnecessary expenses are incurred on the occasion of burial. Special shawls are bought to cover the bier and others for lowering the body into the grave. These are then, according to custom, given to the keepers of the graveyards or some others. It is not permissible to buy these things from the estate of the deceased, especially when some of the heirs are absent or minors. Those who accept these things are not permitted to do so since these belong to the estate.

5. It is the practice in certain areas that food is distributed to all the participants of the Janazah *(funeral service)*. At times they are all invited to

partake of a meal at the residence of the deceased. The cost of these meals is borne by the estate of the deceased. This practice is not permissible since the estate is now the joint property of all the heirs. Nothing may be taken there from without their mutual consent.

6. Thereafter this joint property is used to fund fabricated practices such as ceremonies on the third, tenth and fortieth days following the funeral. While it is common knowledge that these ceremonies are sinful innovations *(bidah)* the sin of utilising the wealth of others duplicates the evil.

7. Another sinful practice is when people are appointed to recite Qur'ān on behalf of the deceased for 40 days, or they are summoned to his home to do so on the fortieth day. These people are then fed as remuneration for their services. The expense of their meals is, again, extracted from the now joint property of the estate. It should be understood that the person who recites Qur'ān due to greed for worldly gains will never gain any reward, let alone passing the same on for the deceased.

8. It is customary with certain people that they buy large quantities of grain with the wealth of the estate. They then encircle the body of the deceased with the grains, where after it is distributed amongst those present. Such practices are against the Shari'ah.

وَالَّٰتِي يَأْتِينَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِن نِّسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ
فَإِن شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَفَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ
سَبِيلًا ﴿15﴾ وَاللَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَانِهَا مِنكُمْ فَآذُوهُمَا ۖ فَإِن تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا
عَنْهُمَا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿16﴾

(15) As for those of your women who are guilty of indecent behaviour, call four witnesses against them. If they testify against them, then imprison them in their homes till death claims them or Allāh creates a way for them. (16) The two who perpetrate indecency from among you should be punished. If they repent and rectify, then let them be. Verily Allāh is Most Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful.

INJUNCTIONS ABOUT THOSE GUILTY OF FORNICATION

The first verse explains that four witnesses need to testify against any woman accused of fornication. The Shari'ah demands conclusive proof for this accusation because it will cause much disrepute to the woman involved and her family.

All four witnesses in such a case need to be male Muslims. A woman's testimony is unacceptable. Although two males or one male and two female witnesses are acceptable in other cases, this case demands four men because it is a matter of honour and chastity.

If four witnesses cannot be found, those making the accusation as well as the available witnesses (less than four) will punished for slander. This punishment is fixed at 80 lashes according to the fourth verse of Surah Nūr (*Sūrah 24*).

If a woman did commit adultery and four witnesses cannot be found, she will not be punished but she will be answerable before Allāh. She should then turn in repentance before Allāh and not think that she can continue to commit the same vile sin because she was not apprehended on the first occasion. Allāh is Ever Aware of every action and will punish a person accordingly.

If the adulteress is a married woman, her punishment will be Stoning *(Rajam)*. This means that she will be stoned to death. If she is not married, then she will be given a hundred lashes. This punishment is enjoined by the Shari'ah in Surah Nūr (*verse* 2). Before this punishment was stipulated, she was required to be under house arrest since emergence from the home leads people to such lewd actions. This initial order is mentioned in the above verse where Allāh declares, ... *imprison them in their homes till death claims them...*

In his explanation of the words, *'Or Allāh creates a way for them,"* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه stated, "Rajam *(stoning)* is for the married and the lashes are for the virgins *(unmarried)*" i.e. after the initial punishment of permanent house arrest, Allāh created a way out for such women by stipulating *(stoning)* Rajam and lashing. This punishment will apply to males and females, the details of which will, Insha Allāh, be mentioned in the discussion of Surah Nūr.

"The two who perpetrate indecency from among you should be punished." This verse does not stipulate the precise punishment and may also include verbal abuse. Determination of the punishment was left to the judge, but with the revelation of the verse of Surah Nūr, Allāh Himself stipulated it.

Allāh then says, *"If they repent and rectify, then let them be. Verily Allāh is Most Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful."*

THE PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE WHO SATISFY THEIR PASSIONS UNNATURALLY

"The two who perpetrate indecency from among you should be punished." With regard to this verse, certain commentators say that reference could be made to those who fulfill their carnal passions unnaturally since the context used usually refers to two women. (The verse will, therefore refer to those who engage in homosexuality and lesbianism).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that both parties found guilty of such a depraved crime should be put to death [*Mishkāt p.312*]. With regard to the method in which these people are to be executed, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, after consulting with Sayyidina Ali and other Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, ruled that they be burnt.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbas رضى الله عنه ruled that they be thrown headlong from the highest summit. [*Ibn Abi Shayba*]

Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that they be given the same punishment as adulterers, while Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه has not stipulated any specific punishment. For the first offence, the Judge may stipulate some form of corporal punishment, and the second time they will be put to death. [*Shāmi*]

إِنَّمَا ٱلتَّوْبَةُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ
فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَيْسَتِ ٱلتَّوْبَةُ
لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّى تُبْتُ
ٱلْـَٰٔنَ وَلَا ٱلَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾

(17) Allāh is only obliged to accept the repentance of those who perpetrate evil due to ignorance, then forthwith repent. These are the ones whom Allāh pardons. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise. (18) Forgiveness is not for those who commit evil deeds and then, when death presents itself before any of them, they say, 'Now I repent!' Nor is it for those who die as disbelievers. We have prepared for such people an agonising chastisement.

THE NECESSITY FOR REPENTANCE *(TAUBAH)* AND ITS METHOD

In the first verse, Allāh declares that He shall forgive those who turn in repentance to Him if they had perpetrated sins out of ignorance. If their repentance is sincere, Allāh will most surely accept it from them. While minor sins may be atoned for by carrying out good deeds, major sins require sincere repentance *(Taubah)* for them to be pardoned. Frequently committing minor sins causes them to become major sins.

So called minor sins must also not be treated lightly since they also translate into rebellion against the Creator and Cherisher, Allāh. They will also earn their perpetrator punishment in the Hereafter. Whenever a person sins, he should repent to Allāh, irrespective of the sin itself. Allāh refers to this when He says that these people *'forthwith repent."*

THE REALITY OF REPENTANCE *(TAUBAH)*

Contrary to the belief of those who consider it sufficient to merely say the words, "Taubah! Taubah!", true Taubah has three preconditions.

The first is that the person should really feel remorseful and regret that he ever disobeyed his Creator, Allāh. The second is that he makes a firm resolution not to commit the sin again. The third is that he amend any rights he may have impaired, be they the rights of Allāh or of a fellow human. Examples of the rights of Allāh are if he did not pay Zakāh, did not perform the obligatory Hajj, and other obligation *(Fardh)* and compulsory *(Wājib)* acts that he did not fulfill. He will now have to compensate for these by carrying them out.

The person will now have to pay the Zakāh of all the past years, perform Hajj, all Lapse *(Qadha)* Salāh and fasts, etc. In the same way, he will have to pay

back to people whatever rights he may have usurped. He will have to repay whatever monies he may have misappropriated or stolen. So too will he have to compensate those whom he may have cheated by under-weighing or under-measuring in trade. If they are unable to repay they will have to seek pardon from their creditors and have their debts written off.

In a like manner, they will also have to seek pardon from those whom they may have slandered, sworn at or gossiped about. Irrespective of what harm one may have caused to another, one must seek pardon for it and never consider any hurt to be minor. One should brush aside the temporary humility of asking for pardon since this is much lighter than the disgrace of the Hereafter.

In brief, it should be understood that without the above-mentioned three conditions, repentance *(Taubah)* will not be accepted from a person. It is indeed tragio that most people today repent only verbally without any feeling of repentance in their hearts. It seems like the heart does not even know that the tongue is engaged in repentance *(Taubah).* It was to such repentance that Sayyidah Rabiya Basriyya رحمة الله عليها referred to when she said, "Our repentance requires repentance!"

Lesson: *"...perpetrate evil due to ignorance..."* The term "ignorance" in this verse refers to stupidity and foolishness. The person who sins is foolish enough to cast himself into the wrath and subsequent chastisement of Allāh. His stupidity entices him to barter the momentary pleasure of this world for the severe unending tortures of the Hereafter.

This interpretation has been reported from the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم. Therefore no one should think that the person who intentionally commits a sin (knowing that it is a sin) will not be forgiven by Allāh. All sins, whether committed intentionally, erringly, forgetfully or mistakenly, will be forgiven by Allāh as long as the necessary three conditions are fulfilled.

REPENTANCE *(TAUBAH)* NOT ACCEPTED AT THE TIME OF DEATH

Taubah is not accepted from those people who continue to commit sins till they finally reach their dying moments. Neither is it accepted from those who die as disbelievers *(kuffār).*

When death presents itself before a person, he witnesses the realm of the unseen world. At that moment, his repentance will never be accepted. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily Allāh accepts the repentance of his slave as long as he is not in the throes of death" [Ahmad]. This occurs when the soul is about to be removed.

At this time, when the person can see the angels and feel the pangs of death grip hold of him, neither the repentance *(Taubah)* of a Muslim nor that of a disbeliever are accepted. At this point, the Belief of a disbeliever is also not accepted since Belief *(Imān)* of the unseen is required of a person. Once the domain of the unseen becomes visible to the dying person, the unseen will now be considered to be 'seen.' Belief *(Imān)* on something that is 'seen' is not adequate.

Allāh accepts the repentance *(Taubah)* and Belief *(Imān)* of people at any time before they reach the throes of death. The repentance *(Taubah)* should be sincere and, should the person sin after repenting, he should not hesitate to repent again, for Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَرِثُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ كَرْهًا ۖ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ
لِتَذْهَبُوا۟ بِبَعْضِ مَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِينَ بِفَـٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا
كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾

(19) O you who believe, it is not permissible for you to forcibly inherit women. Do not restrain them with the intent of taking back some of that which you gave them; except if they perpetrated flagrant immorality. Live with them in kindness and if you dislike them, then perchance you dislike something wherein Allāh has placed abundant good.

PROHIBITION AGAINST FORCEFULLY INHERITING THE WEALTH AND PERSONS OF WIDOWS

During the period of ignorance, women were oppressed in their persons and in their wealth. When they lost their husbands, women were treated as part of the inheritance. The heirs would do with them as they pleased, marrying them off to whomsoever they fancied. This was a form of trade and the woman had no say in the matter. The dowry would be considered to be the price paid for the woman and some of them would even sell these women as slaves.

The heirs would seize her wealth and she would not receive any part of the inheritance. If she refused to part with her wealth, they would not permit her to leave the home, so that she may wither and die there, or surrender the wealth to them. (This is practiced by some communities even today).

Wives are sometimes compelled to part with their wealth when husbands torment and abuse them till they are forced to give in to their requests. The wives then offer to give up all their wealth and forego the dowry owed to them in exchange for a divorce. The verse warns all believing men to abstain from such oppression.

The only instance when her wealth may be accepted as compensation is when she has *"perpetrated flagrant immorality."* According to certain commentators, this refers to the wife's impudent and insolent behaviour. In this case, it will be perfectly permissible for the husband to accept an amount equivalent to her dowry as *"Khula"*.

Other Scholars *(Ulama)* state that if the wife is guilty of fornication, the husband may accept the dowry back and issue a divorce. This injunction applied during the initial stages of Islām, but since the verses stipulating the punishment

for adultery were revealed, the command to reclaim the dowry was abrogated.

THE COMMAND TO LIVE WITH THE WIFE IN KINDNESS

"Live with them in kindness..." This verse enjoins treating wives kindly and providing for them the necessary meals and clothing. The verse continues to instruct that should a person, *"dislike them* (for some reason), *then* (you should exercise tolerance and think that) *perchance you dislike something wherein Allāh has placed abundant good."*

It may occur that a woman may not be very attractive, but she is extremely dutiful and entertaining. In addition to this she may also be very protective of her husband's property, efficient in her housework, caring towards the children and pious. These are truly notable traits that far supersede superficial beauty.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No believing man should dislike a believing woman. If he dislikes a certain quality in her, he should be pleased with another." [*Muslim v.1 p.475*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "One of those whose Belief *(Imān)* is the most complete is he whose behaviour is best towards his wife and who is most compassionate." [*Mishkāt p.282*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها also narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best of you is he who is the best towards his wife, and I am the best towards my wives." [*Mishkāt pg.281*]

In reality, a person should strive to maintain cordial relations with every person and not cause them the slightest harm. Good relationships can only last if either party is prepared to persevere and endure whatever hardships the other may present.

وَإِنْ أَرَدتُّمُ ٱسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَءَاتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَىٰهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُۥ بُهْتَـٰنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُۥ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنكُم مِّيثَـٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٢١﴾

(20) If you intend to change one wife for another when you have given one of them a large treasure, then do not take anything there from. Would you take it by perpetrating slander and a great sin? (21) How can you take it when each of you have had gone to the other and they have taken a resolute undertaking from you?

PROHIBITION FROM TAKING BACK ANYTHING THAT WAS GIVEN TO THE WIVES

This verse instructs that a person cannot take back anything that he had given his wife when he divorces her with the intention to remarry. Neither can he claim the dowry back, nor any other thing that he may have given to her as a gift.

It is in total contrast to Islāmic behaviour that a person take back what he had given, especially when the couple have lived together for a long period of time and she is not at fault for the separation. On such occasions, the woman is reluctant to part with her wealth, so the husband fabricates tales to coerce her to hand over the wealth, or merely forces her to do so. This is clear injustice and Allāh warns against such behaviour by saying, *"Would you take it by perpetrating slander and a great sin?"*

Thereafter Allāh continues to reprimand saying, *"How can you take it when each of you have had gone to other"*(when you two had engaged in explicit relationships with each other). The woman had handed herself over to her husband and is entitled to receive the dowry in confirmation of this deal. When she had played her part, then how can the man now reclaim his part (dowry)?

Besides this *"they (the women) have taken a resolute undertaking from you?"* (that you will pay the dowry you had stipulated). To contravene this pledge is indeed disgraceful, both from a logical and religious viewpoint.

In brief, it will be unjust for the husband to reclaim the dowry when he promised it to her at marriage and after the couple have lived together intimately for some time.

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ مَا نَكَحَ ءَابَآؤُكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٢﴾

(22) Do not marry those women to whom your fathers were married, except that which has passed. Undoubtedly this is lewd, abominable and an evil path.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST MARRYING STEPMOTHERS

"Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p.141*) reports that this verse was revealed when certain people wanted to marry the former wives of their fathers. Some of those mentioned were Sayyidina Hasan bin Abi Qais رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Aswad bin Khalaf رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Safwan bin Umayyah رضى الله عنه.

It is narrated that when the son of Abu Qais proposed for his stepmother's hand in marriage she exclaimed, "I consider you to be like a son to me. How can I marry you? I shall have to refer the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم." Consequently she did and Allāh revealed the above verse in reply to her query.

During the period of ignorance people used to marry their stepmothers, and certain similar incidents are reported during the early years of Islām as well. However, this was banned forever by the revelation of the above verse. It is evident from this that the mere marriage of a couple (whether the marriage is consummated or not) will irrevocably ban marriage of any of the husband's sons to the wife.

Sayyidina Bara bin Āzib رضى الله عنه narrates that he once saw his maternal uncle, Abu Burda رضى الله عنه with a flag in hand. He asked his uncle where he was going. The reply was that he was instructed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to

behead a particular person who married his stepmother. [*Mishkāt p.274*]

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَٰتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُمْ وَعَمَّٰتُكُمْ وَخَٰلَٰتُكُمْ
وَبَنَاتُ ٱلْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ ٱلْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَٰتُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِىٓ أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُم
مِّنَ ٱلرَّضَٰعَةِ وَأُمَّهَٰتُ نِسَآئِكُمْ وَرَبَٰٓئِبُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِى فِى حُجُورِكُم
مِّن نِّسَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِى دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا۟ دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَٰٓئِلُ أَبْنَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَٰبِكُمْ وَأَن
تَجْمَعُوا۟ بَيْنَ ٱلْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿23﴾

(23) Forbidden for you are your mothers, daughters, sisters, father's sisters, mother's sisters, brother's daughters, sister's daughters, mothers who suckled you, suckling sisters, mothers-in-law and those step-daughters in your care whose mothers you have cohabited with. If you have not cohabited with them, then there is no sin on you (should you marry their daughters). (And forbidden are) The wives of your sons who were born of you, and that you join two sisters (in marriage), except what has passed. Without doubt Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THOSE WOMEN THAT ARE FORBIDDEN TO MARRY

This verse enumerates the "muharramat" i.e. those women to whom a person may not be married. Some of these women are forbidden forever and may never be married, while others are only forbidden because of a reason, which, if removed, shall justify the marriage. An example of the latter group is that woman who is married. As long as she is in wedlock, another man cannot marry her. If her husband dies or divorces her, she may be remarried after the expiry of her Iddah.

Similarly, as long as a woman is married to a man, the wife's sister cannot be married to him. He can marry the sister only if he divorces the wife or the wife dies.

"MUHARRAMĀT ABADIYYAH"

These are those women to whom a person can never be married. They are of three categories:

1. ***Muharramāt Nasabiyyah*** *i.e. those forbidden to a person due to their close relationship with him.*

2. ***Muharramāt Radā'iyyah*** *i.e. those forbidden on account of suckling.*

3. ***Muharramāt bil Musāharah*** *i.e. those forbidden due to marriage ties.*

"MUHARRAMĀT NASABIYYAH"

These are as follows:

"your mothers" – The broad context of the inference includes not only a person's mother, but also his mother's mother, her mother, and all the ascending mothers in the lineage.

"daughters" - This refers not only to one's own daughters, but the daughters of one's children, their daughters and so forth.

"sisters" – Whether they be real (same mother and father), consanguine (same father but different mothers) or uterine (same mother but different fathers).

"father's sisters" - Whether they be real, consanguine or uterine sisters.

"mother's sisters" - Again all types of sisters are included.

"brother's daughters" - Here too all types of brothers and step-brothers are referred to.

"sister's daughters" - Also all types of sisters.

"MUHARRAMĀT RADĀ'IYYAH"

The verse then continues to mention these Muharramāt. They are: *"mothers who suckled you"* and *"suckling sisters" i.e.* those women who were suckled by the same foster mother.

The Qur'ān suffices with the mention of just two of a person's foster relatives. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained a blanket rule when he indicated that those women who are forbidden in terms of kin ship will also be forbidden in terms of suckling. [*Bukhari p.764, Muslim p.467*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that after the verses of Hijāb (seclusion for women) were revealed, her foster uncle requested permission to enter her quarters. She refused saying that she will first have to consult with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم regarding the matter. When she asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said, "He is your foster uncle. You may permit him to enter." She enquired, "But a woman suckled me, not a man!" The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reiterated, "He is your foster uncle and may enter your home." [*Bukhari p.7641788 and Muslim v.1 p.467*]

The author of "Hidāya" writes that when a woman suckles a girl, the woman's husband, fathers, sons and grandsons become forbidden to the girl. The husband due to whom the wet nurse receives the milk in her breasts will be considered to be the suckling girl's father.

If a boy and girl both suckled from the same woman, the two will be considered to be brother and sister. They will, therefore, not be able to marry each other. In a similar manner, the sisters and sisters in law of a woman will be forbidden for the boy whom she suckled because they become his maternal and

paternal aunts respectively. Similarly the wife of the suckled boy cannot be married to the foster mother's husband.

Ruling: The laws whereby marriage becomes forbidden will apply even if a single drop of milk once entered the throat of a child.

Ruling: All the jurists are unanimous that these laws will apply when the child is suckled before turning two (according to the lunar calendar). However, caution will demand that the period be regarded as two and a half years since this is the opinion of Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه.

Ruling: For these laws to apply, it is necessary that two men or two women and one man testify that a certain woman suckled a certain child. However, caution demands that the testimony of even one woman be accepted if she claims to have suckled the child.

Ruling: These laws will apply even if milk was extracted from the breasts of a dead woman and fed to a child.

Ruling: If by some freak occurrence, milk is drawn from the breasts of a man and this is fed to a child, the above laws will not be applicable.

Much is still left unsaid and may be referred to in the detailed books of Islāmic jurisprudence.

"MUHARRAMĀT BIL MUSAHĀRAH"

The verse continues to mention:

"mothers in law" - This prohibition will apply whether the marriage was consummated or not.

"those step-daughters in your care whose mothers you have cohabited with. If you have not cohabited with them, then there is no sin on you (should you marry their daughters)." It should be noted that these step-daughters will be forbidden in marriage to their step-father (who consummated his marriage to their mother) even though they are in the care of someone else.

"The wives of your sons who were born of you" - This will apply irrespective of whether the son consummated the marriage or not.

Ruling: It is also forbidden for a person to marry the wives of his grandsons.

Ruling: Marriage to the wives of one's foster sons is also forbidden.

Ruling: Marriage to a person's adopted son will be permissible once her Iddah *(the probationary period for divorced women and widows)* has expired. Commentators mention that this is the reason for the clause *"who were born of you."* When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married the divorced wife of his adopted son, Sayyidina Zaid bin Hāritha رضى الله عنه, his enemies criticised him. On that occasion revealed the following verse, *"When Zaid completed his need from her We married her to you so that there be no restriction upon the believers with regard to (marriage to) the wives of their adopted sons when they have completed their needs from them."* [*Surah Ahzāb, verse 37*]

Lesson: Just as an adopted child is not considered to be a real child, so too will the case be with adoptive parents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, etc. none of these will be considered to be real. Therefore, the laws forbidding marriage will not apply unless some other restraining factors exist.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST MARRYING TWO SISTERS AT THE SAME TIME

"and that you join two sisters, except what has passed." A person may only marry his wife's sister after his wife dies or she completes her Iddah after he divorces her.

Lesson: Just as two sisters may not be married to the same man at the same time, an aunt and niece may also not be wedded at the same time to the same man. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم prohibited the marriage of a woman together with her paternal aunt, and a paternal aunt together with her brother's daughter. In the same way, he prohibited the marriage of a woman and her maternal aunt to the same man at once as he did prohibit a maternal aunt being married to the husband of her sister's daughter. [*Mishkāt p.274 and Bukhari v.2 p.766*]

Lesson: Jurists maintain that it is not permissible to marry two such women at the same time who, if either was assumed to be a man, then marriage between the two will not be permissible.

Allāh then states, *"Without doubt Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful"*

PART FIVE

۞ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۖ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَأُحِلَّ
لَكُم مَّا وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَن تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُم مُّحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ ۚ فَمَا
اسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا
تَرَاضَيْتُم بِهِ مِن بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا (24)

(24) (Forbidden to you in marriage are) Married women except those whom you own. Allāh has ordained these injunctions upon you. Lawful for you are all women besides these, that you seek with your wealth in chastity, not lechery. Those from whom you seek to derive benefit, give them their specified dowry. There is no sin on you should you agree on something else after the specified amount. Verily Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise.

PROHIBITION AGAINST MARRYING A WOMAN WHO IS MARRIED TO SOMEONE ELSE

A married woman can be married to another man only when her husband dies or divorces her and then she completes her iddah. Even if her current marriage was not consummated, she still cannot be wed to another until released from her present husband.

The only exception is when Muslims capture disbelievers *(kuffār)* women during a Jihād *(religion war)*. In this case, the Leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* may distribute these women among the Muslim soldiers. When each person takes possession of his slave girl, it will be lawful for him to cohabit with her even though she was married in her country. The law is that as soon as she leaves the boundaries of her native disbeliever *(kāfir)* country *("Dārul Harb")* and enters the Muslim country *("Dārul Islām")*, her marriage terminates. She will then be lawful for whichever Muslim soldier she is given to by the leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)*. This is what the verse refers to when it states, *"except those whom you own."* [*Muslim p.470*]

"Lawful for you are all women besides these (that have been mentioned thusfar)..." Those whom a person may lawfully marry include all his cousins as well as the wives of his maternal and paternal uncles after they have passed their Iddahs after being divorced or widowed. This is only permissible on condition that no other relationship of Muharramāt exists between the man and woman.

The general connotation of the verse may include many more women, but some not mentioned in the verse are still forbidden. Much has already been discussed and the balance may be referred to in the detailed books of jurisprudence.

SEEKING WIVES BY PAYING DOWER

"*.......that you seek with your wealth.*" This verse underlines the importance of the dowry. Even though the couple agree not to settle for a dowry, it will still be binding upon the husband, the minimum of which (according to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, is ten Dirhams. If no dowry was stipulated at the time of contracting the marriage, it will still have to be paid later on. This was discussed in Surah Baqarah.

CHASTITY AND PURITY ARE DESIRED IN MARRIAGE

"*......in chastity, not lechery.*" This indicates that the objective of marriage should not merely be sexual gratification, but it should be contracted with a view to protect one's chastity and honour. Together with this, a Muslim should also intend to procreate and to safeguard his gaze.

Although money may also be spent in fornication, the objective of this vile deed is merely sexual gratification. In the process, chastity and honour are sacrificed at the altar of mere physical satisfaction. The objective of fornication is never to reproduce, and should a child be born, he will never be legitimate. The illegitimate child is frowned upon by every nation and it is for this reason that adultery is forbidden by all Dīns *(religions)*.

THE PROHIBITION OF "MUT'AH"

The above verse also alludes to the prohibition of the shameless action called "Mut'ah", which is practiced by certain deviant sects. This is an act whereby a couple cohabit merely to gratify their sexual pleasures, without the intent to preserve their chastity, nor to procreate.

The prohibition of this act is mentioned clearly in the opening verses of Surah Mu'minīn. Allāh says, "*Those people who safeguard their sexual organs save unto their wives and slave girls. So indeed there is no blame on them. Whosoever transgresses beyond these, then such ones are surely transgressors*" [*Surah 23, verses 5,6 & 7*]. This verse makes it evident that a person may cohabit only with his wives or his slave girls. Those who perpetrate Mut'ah neither regard their partners as wives, nor do they grant them a share in inheritance. These women can therefore never be lawful for them.

THE INSTRUCTION TO PAY THE MAHR *(DOWER)*

"*Those from whom you seek to derive benefit, give them their specified dowry.*" This verse emphasises the importance of paying the dower *(Mahr)*. According to the relevant verses in Surah Baqarah, a person is required to pay the full dower *(Mahr)* initially agreed upon before the marriage was consummated. If it was not consummated, then he will only have to pay half. Those people should take heed of this verse who live with their wives for years without bothering to pay her the

dower *(Mahr)*.

"There is no sin on you should you agree on something else after the specified amount." It is perfectly permissible for the couple to alter their initial agreement e.g. if the wife decides to waive the dower *(Mahr)* completely, or a part thereof. Similarly it will be permissible for the husband to increase the dower *(Mahr)*, and the wife also reserves the right to allow the dower *(Mahr)* to be paid off on terms instead of cash.

"Verily Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise." He ordains the various injunctions according to His supreme knowledge of the conditions and temperaments of people. All His orders are full of wisdom and those who carry them out shall benefit, whereas those who do not shall be punished according to His divine wisdom.

وَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنكُمْ طَوْلًا أَن يَنكِحَ ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ فَمِن مَّا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم مِّن فَتَيَٰتِكُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَٰنِكُم ۚ بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ
بَعْضٍ ۚ فَٱنكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَءَاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَٰتٍ غَيْرَ
مُسَٰفِحَٰتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَٰتِ أَخْدَانٍ ۚ فَإِذَآ أُحْصِنَّ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ
نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِىَ ٱلْعَنَتَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَأَن
تَصْبِرُوا۟ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿25﴾

(25) Those of you who do not have the means to marry a free believing woman should marry from one of your believing slave girls. Allāh knows best the condition of your Belief (Imān). Each of you is equal to the next. So marry (these slave girls) with the permission of their masters and give them their dowries in a kind manner (and these women should) be chaste, not adulteresses or such that they foster secretive relationships. Once they enter into marriage and then perpetrate lewdness, they should be given half the punishment applicable to free women. This is for those of you from whom you fear adultery. It is best for you to be patient and Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful

PERMISSION TO MARRY SLAVE GIRLS

A person may cohabit with his slave girl but may not be married to her. There is no necessity for this since he may legally cohabit with her, and the children born to them will be considered to be legitimate. It is, however, possible that the slave girl may be married to another Muslim person with the consent of her master. The dowry will then become the property of the master. This is discussed in the above verse.

According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, the person who is capable of marrying a free woman cannot marry a slave. Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that a person may marry a slave despite his ability to marry a free woman. The

only precondition is that she be Muslim or from the people of the Book. However, to do so is considered to be reprehensible *(Makrūh)*. [*Bahrur Rā'iq v.3 p. 112*]

It should be borne in mind that the purpose of Nikah (marriage) is the protection of one's chastity and reproduction. This pivotal aspect of marriage demands that the parents pay attention to the upbringing of their children. The children normally learn the language of their mothers (this is why the home language is referred to as the 'mother tongue') and acquire the traits and habits taught by their mothers. Their Dīn *(religion)*, beliefs, etiquette, character, morals and all basic education are learnt from their mothers. It is for this reason that a person should be particular when choosing a wife. She should be a person of high and noble morality, piety and cleanliness.

If a man is unable to support a free woman or unable to afford her dowry *(Mahr)*, he has the option to marry a slave woman. Then too he should ensure that she is a Muslim of upright and righteous conduct.

"Allāh knows best the condition of your Belief (Imān). Each of you is equal to the next." It may occur that a slave woman is stronger in her belief than a free woman. The fact that she is a slave should not deter a person from marrying her since she will make a good wife. He should, therefore, proceed to *"marry them with the permission of their masters and give them their dowries in a kind manner."* Every human is the child of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and if a man marries a slave he has married none other than a member of his own species.

"........(and these slave women should) be chaste, not adulteresses or such that they foster secretive relationships." A person should marry only a chaste woman, be she a free woman or a slave. This verse especially makes reference to slaves in this regard since they are more susceptible to sinning due to the fact that the nature of their work demands that they leave their homes.

"Once they enter into marriage and then perpetrate lewdness (adultery), they should be given half the punishment applicable to free women." This refers to the punishment given to unmarried free women who would normally receive a hundred lashes. The slave woman will, therefore, receive fifty lashes only.

It is obvious that the reference could not be to the punishment of a married free person since their punishment is death by stoning. This penalty cannot possibly be halved. The penalty for a slave (man or woman) will be fifty lashes irrespective of their marital status. The details of this will, Insha Allāh, be discussed at length in Surah Nūr.

"This is for those of you from whom you fear adultery. It is best for you to be patient and Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." This verse means that marriage to slave women is for those men who cannot afford to marry a free woman and who fear that they may perpetrate fornication if they do not marry. It will be best, though, if he remains patient and controls his desires.

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ

وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا۟ مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

(26) Allāh wishes to explain to you, guide you to the practices of those before you, and forgive you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise. (27) Allāh wishes to forgive you and those who follow their desires only wish that you fall into gross deviation. (28) Allāh wishes to unburden you, and man has been created weak.

WHILE ALLĀH WISHES TO ACCEPT YOUR REPENTANCE WHILST THOSE WHO FOLLOW THEIR DESIRES, WISH TO DERAIL YOU FROM THE TRUTH

The first verse explains that the injunctions commanded by Allāh are for man's benefit. Allāh also explained the practices of previous nations so that it be understood that they were also required to carry out His injunctions, which they fulfilled.

"Allāh wishes to forgive you (therefore, seek forgiveness from Him) and those who follow their desires, wish that you fall into gross deviation." These people have no concern for shame and chastity so they indulge in all forms of lewd acts, wishing that the Muslim also will follow them in their ways. They detest that the Muslim adheres to modesty and sober behaviour without losing sight of Allāh's injunctions. They desire that all become slaves of their passions instead. The Muslim should hold fast to his Dīn *(religion)* so that these people do not deter him from the truth. They should guard against those who aim to plunge them into the abyss of immorality by using novels, TV, films and video.

THE WEAKNESS OF MAN HAS BEEN GRANTED CONSIDERATION IN DIVINE LEGISLATURE

"Allāh wishes to unburden you (make your task easier), and man has been created weak." Allāh is Aware of man's inherent weakness and has passed such laws that are within the ambit of his capability.

Allāh has not only permitted marriage but instructed it. Then too, man is allowed up to four wives. Dower *(Mahr)* has been ordained so that the woman is also accorded some status. Man is also permitted to derive benefit from slave women, be he married to them or not. Allāh allows these and other concessions because of man's weakness.

At the same time, man was also not left totally free. Certain restrictions govern his life. While he may derive benefit from women, he may do so only within wedlock, abiding by certain injunctions. If these were not observed, man would be no better than an animal, and he would lose his status as the best of creation. Such has become the despicable lot of those who chose not to abide by the laws of Shari'ah *(Islāmic Laws)*.

THE WAYS OF THOSE WHO INDULGE IN THEIR PASSIONS

Such people shy away from being human beings and have wandered into the depths of bestiality. The flood of immorality, promiscuity and depravity that has invaded Europe and America has left people of all social echelons floundering in its wake. It is common with occidental systems of legislation that they pass a law on trial. When it is noticed that people cannot abide, these laws are amended.

Although rape is outlawed in their constitutions, adultery and fornication are allowed without restraint. Now they have also permitted homosexuality and lesbianism and even their religious and social leaders indulge in these obscenities. They fit perfectly in the following declaration of Allāh, *"As for the disbelievers, they enjoy themselves and eat like the animals eat. The Fire shall be their abode."* [*Surah Muhammad, verse 12*]

Today even the Muslim countries perpetrate the evils learned from their disbelievers *(kuffār)* tutors. Not only do Muslims commit these indecencies, but they have formed organisations to promote the abolition of marriage *(Nikah)*. Magazines are published weekly and monthly promoting immodesty and by displaying pictures of naked men and women. These publications incite the passions, inducing people to fornicate.

Previously, romantic films were screened only in cinemas. Then pornographic scenes were gradually introduced until today the most licentious scenes are flagrantly shown. Now the same promiscuous programmed are common in every home after the introduction of Tv's and videos. The old and the young have all been subjected to this indecency, and matters have deteriorated to such an extent that parents watch these scenes with their children and even encourage it.

There is no difference between the movies produced in 'Islāmic' countries and those produced elsewhere. People who appear to be religious do not prevent their children from purchasing these devices of sin that are so commonly available. The minds of people have become inundated with scenes of nudity and immorality. People still adhering to their staunch religious roots cannot hope to influence the new generation who refuse to listen to the Qur'ān and Hadith. People have been swept to such an ebb that a colossal effort will have to made to turn the tide.

In times gone by a person who committed adultery was scorned by society and would never make his actions known. Nowadays chastity is frowned upon and fornication receives favourable publicity.

CHASTE BEHAVIOUR AND MODESTY WERE THE HALLMARKS OF THE PROPHET عليه السلام

Every prophet عليه السلام taught morality and chaste behaviour to his nation. Sayyidina Abu Ayub Ansari رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Four traits were common in all the Prophet عليه السلام, viz. (1) Modesty, (2) Applying perfume, (3) Brushing the teeth with the Miswāk and (4) Nikah." [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "Every Dīn *(religion)* has a unique character. That of Islām is modesty." [*Mishkāt p. 432*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Modesty and Belief *(Imān)* are one and the same thing. If either of the two is removed, the other will not exist." [*Ibid*]

The truth of the above statement is evident. Those nations that do not possess modesty do not have Belief *(Imān)*, and the Belief *(Imān)* of those Muslims who are losing their modesty is also dwindling. Many Muslims who live in Western countries are being robbed of their Belief *(Imān)* and soon their progeny will be totally bereft of any sign of Belief *(Imān)*.

The first restriction Islām placed in this regard was the guarding of one's gaze. Women are commanded to remain within their homes and, if they need to emerge, they must conceal themselves in the veil *(Hijāb)* and must not apply perfume. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that a woman is an object that needs to be concealed. He said that when she emerges from her home, Satan *(Shaytān)* diverts everyone's gazes towards her. [*Mishkāt p.269*]

It is indeed sad that many people claim to be Muslims yet follow the immodest lifestyles of Islām's enemies. The schemes of the enemies are still in motion to further deviate the Muslims and rob them of every fiber of shame. What kind of a Muslim will not take heed of Allāh' s warning when He exclaims, *"those who follow their desires wish that you fall into gross deviation?"*

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ عُدْوَٰنًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

(29) O you who believe, do not unjustly consume the wealth of each other except if it be by way of trade transacted with mutual consent. Do not kill yourselves. Indeed Allāh is Most Merciful to you. (30) Whosoever will do this out of enmity and injustice, We shall soon enter him into the Fire. This is all too easy for Allāh.

PROHIBITION AGAINST CONSUMING WEALTH ILLEGALLY AND THE PRINCIPLES OF TRADE

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.417*) writes that the unjust consuming of wealth referred to in this verse denotes practices such as dealing in usury, gambling, robbery, stealing, misappropriation of trusts, and all those methods forbidden by the Shari'ah.

Other commentators interpret it to mean all those forms of business transactions that are invalid in the Shari'ah.

The only exception by which the wealth of another is lawful is *"if it be by way of trade transacted with mutual consent."* The condition stipulated in this verse is that both the transacting parties must be satisfied with the transaction. Neither must be forced into the deal.

It is unlawful *(Harām)* to take someone's property without his or her permission. If the seller is forced to agree on a certain price or forced to sell when he is not willing to, then this will also be Unlawful *(Harām)*.

TRANSACTIONS THAT ARE NOT PERMITTED

The following are not permitted:

⇒ *To transact in swine, liquor and carrion.*

⇒ *To give or take a bribe.*

⇒ *To sell something that does not belong to one.*

⇒ *To sell a bird that is still flying in the air, or a fish that has not yet been caught.*

⇒ *To lie to the customer that he is being sold an item at cost price when it is really not so.*

⇒ *Rentals of properties are also considered to be transactions and have to be transacted with mutual consent. Some people perpetrate the sin of forcibly occupying an empty house and then forcing the owner to rent it to them. If he agrees, they then take the liberty to fix the rent even though the owner is unhappy. Such practices are Harām.*

⇒ *Certain countries have a law whereby the landlord can neither evict their tenants, nor raise the rental. It is not permissible for a Muslim to practise this unjust law since it is detrimental to the landlord?*

⇒ *Some people sell a commodity at a reduced price and then write out a receipt to the effect that it was sold at a higher price. This receipt is then shown to another person who is told that he can purchase it at cost. He then pays the inflated price for the item thinking that he had bought it at cost. This is cheating and abolished by the Shariah.*

"Do not kill yourselves." Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that a person should not destroy himself by consuming Unlawful *(Harām)* wealth. Such practices will lead only towards destruction in the Hereafter.

Others are of the opinion that it means that people should not kill each other. Still another group maintains that it refers to suicide. The broad context of the verse accommodates all of these interpretations. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" p.418*]

It is indeed unfortunate that in these times murder is extremely rife. Muslims kill one another because of trivial reasons. The enemies of Islām are always instigating them to fight each other, and the process seems never ending.

The warnings sounded by Allāh against murder will, Insha Allāh, be discussed in the verse of Surah Nisā where Allāh says, *"Whoever murders a believer intentionally..."* [*Surah 4, verse 93*]

THE SIN OF SUICIDE

The human body and soul are the exclusive property of Allāh. Therefore, no person can take his own life. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who commits suicide by jumping off a mountain will remain in the fire of Hell, continuously ascending and then jumping off a mountain. The person who commits suicide by swallowing poison shall remain in the fire of Hell with the poison in his hand, swallowing it until eternity. The one who commits suicide using an iron object shall remain forever in the fire of Hell, piercing his belly with it." [*Mishkāt p.295*]

Growing frustrated with the problems of this world, some people resort to suicide, not understanding that the problems and torment of the Hereafter are much more severe.

"Indeed Allāh is Most Merciful to you." People should regard all. Allāh's commandments as a blessing to themselves and act upon each of them, even those that appear to be difficult should be carried out since their violation will only cause destruction.

"Whosoever will do this out of enmity and injustice, We shall soon enter him into the Fire." The person who kills another for no valid reason shall suffer this pitiable plight. The same shall be the plight of those who commit suicide. None can escape the grip of Allāh, neither before, nor after death.

"This is all too easy for Allāh." He is Capable of anything and all are at His mercy."

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم
مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

(31) From all the things forbidden to you, if you refrain from the major sins, We shall expiate for your evil deeds and enter you into a place of honour.

THE PROMISE TO EXPIATE SINS

In this verse, expiation of minor sins is promised if the major sins are avoided. Some people have argued that this verse and numerous others seem to indicate that the person who merely refrains from the major sins must be forgiven even though he perpetrates minor sins and neglects the other duties of Islām.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.2 p.222*) replies to this by saying that forgiveness depends on Allāh. If He wishes to pardon a person, He may do so, otherwise He is at liberty to punish the sinner.

Other commentators maintain that the *"major sins"* mentioned in this verse refer to all things that lead to disbelief *(kufr)*. Therefore, if a person abstains from all such actions and dies as a Muslim, Allāh will pardon him. All sins, because they are minor by comparison to disbelief (kufr), will be considered to be minor. This forgiveness is dependant upon the will of Allāh, as He says, *"Verily Allāh will not pardon polytheism (shirk), but shall forgive all other sins for those whom He wills."* [*Surah Nisā, verse 48*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The five Salāh, one Jumu'ah to the next and one Ramadhān to the next will atone for all the sins committed in between as long as major sins are avoided." [*Muslim v.1 p.122*]

According to another hadith of Muslim (*v.1 p.121*) the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "The Muslim who, when the hour of Salāh draws near, performs a proper ablution *(wudhu)* and then observes proper bowing *(ruku)* and prostration *(sajdah)*, these will atone for all his previous sins as long as he does not commit major sins.

It will appear from the above Ahādīth that minor sins will be forgiven only when a person abstains from major sins. However; Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه clarified the issue. He writes that in the above cases, all minor sins are forgiven and that major sins are not forgiven except with repentance *(Taubah)* and the mercy of Allāh. This, he writes, has also been mentioned by Qadhi Ayādh رحمة الله عليه and is the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamā'ah.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that a person once kissed a woman. Regretting his action, he related the incident to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Thereupon the following verse of Surah Hūd was revealed, *"Establish Salāh at the two ends of the day and a portion of the night. Verily good deeds eradicate evil deeds."* The person enquires of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Is this glad tiding for me only?" The reply was, "For all the members of my Ummah." [*Mishkāt v.1 p.58*]

The above verse as well as numerous Ahādīth bear testimony to the fact that sins are expiated by means of good deeds.

Some commentators have explained that the verse under discussion is linked to the previous one. (The previous verse warned against unlawfully taking the wealth of another person). They say that the person who sets about to take away the wealth of another (by stealing, robbing, etc), then changes his mind, Allāh will forgive all the sins associated with this planned action. This is because he, out of fear for Allāh, abstained from the major sin that he had originally set out to do.

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR SINS?

In his book dedicated exclusively to this subject, Hāfidh Shamsud Dīn *(religion)* Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه, explains that there exists a difference of opinion with regard to the precise number of major sins. Some maintain that there are seven, based on a hadith of Bukhari and Muslim. He says that this hadith does not restrict them to seven, but merely mentions the seven most serious sins. As there are also different levels of these sins, their numbers may increase. According to

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه they number seventy.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه reports (*v.3 p.159*) from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that a major sin is that for which Allāh has promised Hell, His wrath, His curse or some punishment. He is reported to have said that they number close to 700. He says, "No major sin remains after repentance and no minor remains if persisted upon (they then become major)."

Hāfidh Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه has listed 70 of the major sins together with the punishment for each of them. The title of the book is "Kitābul Kabā'ir" and one may refer to it for further details.

LIST OF MAJOR SINS

The following is list of major sins:

1. *Shirk (polytheism) and those beliefs and actions that lead to it. (The sin of polytheism (shirk) will never be forgiven as was already mentioned).*
2. *Intentionally killing someone.*
3. *Black magic.*
4. *Neglecting the obligatory (fardh) Salāh and performing them before time.*
5. *Not paying Zakāh.*
6. *Not fasting in the month of Ramadhān 'without a valid excuse, or breaking the fast without an excuse.*
7. *To die without performing Hajj when one had the means.*
8. *To hurt one's parents and to disobey them wh n their instructions are not contrary to the Shari'ah.*
9. *To break, family ties.*
10. *Committing adultery.*
11. *Committing incest and gratifying sexual passions in an unnatural way.*
12. *Taking any part in a transaction involving interest.*
13. *To usurp the wealth of an orphan.*
14. *To attribute lies to Allāh or His Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم.
15. *To desert the battlefield*
16. *For a leader to deceive his subjects.*
17. *To be proud.*
18. *To give false testimony or conceal testimony when the right of a person may be save by it.*
19. *To consume intoxicants.*

20. *Gambling.*
21. *To slander a chaste woman.*
22. *To misappropriate the booty.*
23. *Stealing.*
24. *Robbery.*
25. *Taking false oaths.*
26. *To oppress in any way (assault, stealing, verbal abuse).*
27. *To collect taxes.*
28. *To utilise Unlawful (Harām) wealth.*
29. *To commit suicide and to sever a limb.*
30. *Lying.*
31. *To pass Judgment contrary to the Shari'ah.*
32. *Bribery.*
33. *To imitate the opposite gender (shaving of the beard is also included in this).*
34. *To be unconcerned about the lewd behaviour of one's family.*
35. *To marry and cohabit with a woman merely so that her husband may take her back after he had issued three divorces (this practice is called Halālah").*
36. *To be heedless of drops of urine that contaminate one clothing.*
37. *To carry out actions to show off.*
38. *To seek religious knowledge for worldly motives or to conceal this knowledge.*
39. *To breach a trust.*
40. *To remind another of a favour done to him.*
41. *To refute fate (predestination).*
42. *To spy on others.*
43. *To carry tales.*
44. *To curse.*
45. *To deceive people and not fulfill a pledge.*
46. *To believe those who 'predict' the future (fortune-tellers, etc.).*
47. *To disobey the husband.*
48. *To make a picture or display it in the home.*
49. *Upon the death of a person to wail, slap the face, tear the*

clothes, shave the hair or pray for destruction.

50. *To rebel against and to harm Muslim.*

51. *To be tyrannical towards Allāhs creation.*

52. *To harm the neighbour.*

53. *To harm Muslims and speak ill of them.*

54. *To harm the pious people in particular.*

55. *For men to allow any garments to hang at or below the ankles.*

56. *For men to wear silk garments or gold jewellery.*

57. *For a slave to abscond from his master.*

58. *To sacrifice an animal in the name of another besides Allāh.*

59. *To intentional name another person as one's father.*

60. *To that and argue merely to create anarchy.*

61. *To refuse water to a person in need.*

62. *To cheat in weight and measurement.*

63. *To be fearless of Allāh's chastisement.*

64. *To harm the friends of Allāh.*

65. *To be negligent of performing Salāh in congregation.*

66. *To omit the Jumu'ah Salāh without justification*

67. *To make a bequest with the express intent of harming an heir.*

68. *To fashion evil schemes and deceive people.*

69. *To spy on the confidential matters of Muslims and pass on the information.*

70. *To swear any of the Companions (Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم.

Hāfidh Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه has listed the seventy major sins up to this point. Included in these are many that are well known, but still many others have been omitted. Below shall follow many more major sins as recorded in the book of Allāma Zainuddin Ibn Nujaim Hanafi رحمة الله عليه. This treatise of his is published at the end of his famous work titled "Al Ashbā wan Nadhā'ir".

⇒ *To become an accomplice to a tyrannical ruler, and neglect to enjoin good and forbid evil when able to do so.*

⇒ *To learn, teach or practise black, magic.*

⇒ *To forget the Qur'ān after memorising it.*

⇒ *To burn any living being alive.*

⇒ *To become despondent of the mercy of Allāh.*

⇒ *To consume carrion or swine without being constrained to do*

so.

⇒ *To persist in committing minor sins.*

⇒ *To assist or instigate the commission of sins.*

⇒ *To adopt a career in singing.*

⇒ *To expose one's private parts in front of others.*

⇒ *Dancing.*

⇒ *To love the world.*

⇒ *To speak, ill of scholars and those who memorise the Qur'ān.*

⇒ *To betray one's leader.*

⇒ *To slander the birth of any person.*

⇒ *To invite others towards anything deviant.*

⇒ *To point a weapon at another person without justification.*

⇒ *To castrate one's slave or sever any part of his body.*

⇒ *To show ingratitude to one who has done a good turn (a good Samaritan).*

⇒ *To practise apostasy, especially in the Unlawful (Harām).*

⇒ *To play chess and all such games that are forbidden by consensus of the 'Ummah.*

⇒ *To use drugs*

⇒ *To call a Muslim a disbeliever (kāfir).*

⇒ *To be unjust between one's many wives.*

⇒ *To masturbate.*

⇒ *To cohabit while menstruating.*

⇒ *To rejoice at disturbances in Muslim countries.*

⇒ *To perform indecent acts with an animal.*

⇒ *For an Ālim (religious scholar) not to practise his knowledge.*

⇒ *To criticise food.*

⇒ *To gaze at a beardless youngster.*

⇒ *To look, into or enter the home of another without permission.*

Certain sins have been omitted from the above list since they passed in the first list of Hāfiz Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه.

THE LIST OF MINOR SINS

Hereunder follows a list of minor sins also compiled by Allāma Ibn Nujaim رحمة الله عليه.

1. *To look, at forbidden things.*
2. *To kiss or touch with desire any woman besides one's wife.*
3. *To be secluded with a strange (non Mahram) woman.*
4. *To use utensils made of gold or silver.*
5. *To abstain from speaking to another Muslim for more than three days.*
6. *To intentionally laugh while performing Salāh..*
7. *To urinate while standing.*
8. *To wail, slap the face or tear clothing when some calamity occurs.*
9. *To walk, proudly.*
10. *To associate with a sinner.*
11. *To perform Salāh during the reprehensible times.*
12. *To take any impurity into the Mosque (Masjid) or any person (child or insane) when there exists a strong possibility of impurity being on his body or clothes.*
13. *To sit facing the Qibla or facing the back, towards the Qibla when urinating or relieving one's self.*
14. *To expose one's private parts for no reason even when in seclusion.*
15. *To fast for days continuously without breaking the fast in between.*
16. *To cohabit with one's wife before paying the Kaffāra of 'Zihār" (refer to the beginning of Surah Mujādala [Surah 58] for the details of 'Zihār').*
17. *For a woman to travel without her husband or a M'ahram.*
18. *To make a high bit for an item one toes not intend to buy, merely to inflate the price for those interested in buying.*
19. *To keep necessary commodities in storage (without selling them) waiting for the price to increase.*
20. *To make an offer to purchase something or to marry a woman after another person has already done so.*
21. *To buy out a merchant who is due to present competition so that one may monopolies the market.*
22. *To buy out commodities from the rural areas before they reach the town so that one may sell them at an inflated price.*
23. *To engage in trade after the Adhān for the jumu'ah Salāh has been given.*

24. *To sell an item without disclosing its defects.*

25. *To raise dogs for reasons besides that of protection and grazing animals.*

26. *To skip over the shoulders of people when entering the Mosque (Masjid).*

27. *To delay the payment of Zakāh.*

28. *To inconvenience road users by engaging in trade or using the road as a toilet. (Similarly, it will also be sinful to use such places as toilets that people frequent, or to use water sources for this purpose.)*

29. *To give the Adhān or enter the Mosque (Masjid) while in the state of impurity (Janābah).*

30. *To place the hands on the hips or fidget with something while performing Salāh.*

31. *To turn the head and look, around while performing Salāh.*

32. *To engage in worldly talk, while in the Mosque (Masjid) or any such activities that are not considered to be Ibādah (acts of worship).*

33. *For a fasting person to kiss and embrace hioner spouse when there is a danger that they will engage in sexual relations, thereby breaking their fasts.*

34. *To pay zakāh from wealth of an inferior quality*

35. *To sever the entire head from the body of the animal being slaughtered.*

36. *For a mature woman to marry without the consent of her guardian.*

37. *For a husband to issue more than one divorce at once.*

38. *To issue a divorce while the wife is menstruating.*

39. *To issue a divorce during the wife's period of purity ("Tuhr" the period between menstrual cycles) when intercourse took, place during the same period of purity .*

40. *To favour some of one's children above the rest (unless there exists some legitimate grounds).*

41. *For a judge not to treat the plaintiff and defendant equally.*

42. *To accept a gift from or to partake of the food of a person whose wealth is ill-gotten.*

43. *'To walk, on the land of a person without his permission.*

44. *To mutilate any living being.*

45. *To make prostration (sajdah) on a picture of an animate object when performing Salāh, or to perform Salāh with such pictures in the vicinity.*

46. *To greet a disbeliever (kāfir) with the words of Salām.*

47. *To clothe a child in such attire that is not permissible for a grown person to wear.*

48. *To continue eating after being satiated.*

49. *To think, ill of a Muslim.*

50. *To listen to frivolous talks.*

51. *To listen to a back, biter without reprimanding him.*

52. *To lead people in Salāh against their wishes (when they are unhappy with the Scholar (Imām) for some reasonable grounds).*

53. *To speak, while the jumu'ah sermon is being delivered.*

54. *To place impurities on the roof of the mosque (Masjid) or on the road leading to the mosque (Masjid).*

55. *To make a promise to someone without intending to fulfill it.*

56. *To joke with or praise anyone excessively.*

57. *To become angry without a reason that is valid in the Shari'ah.*

The above list includes those sins that are common amongst people. Other sins mentioned by Allāma Ibn Nujaim رحمة الله عليه have been omitted for the sake of brevity. Some of the minor sins mentioned in the list are debatable, like the sin of not speaking to a Muslim for more than three days. It should be included in the major sins because the hadith severely reprimands such behaviour.

Various Scholars *(Ulama)* differ in their specification of minor sins. Hafidh Dhahabi رحمة الله عليه included in his list the sins of nullifying Hajj, Umrah and Salāh without valid reasons. Allāma Ibn Nujaim رحمة الله عليه however, has not listed these in his list. Many other sins have been omitted from the above lists that have been mentioned in the Ahādīth.

Minor sins are, nonetheless, sins and have to be avoided. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Abstain from the minor sins as well because they will also have to be accounted for." (Allāh has appointed angels to record these as well). [*Mishkāt p. 458*]

Lesson: A minor sin will be considered minor when a person commits it while fearful of Allāh. However, if he commits a minor sin heedlessly (thinking that it is a "small thing"), then this sin will be considered to be a major sin. Similarly a minor sin will be considered a major sin when it is persistently practiced. To ignore and attach no importance to the warnings sounded in the Qur'ān and Ahādīth constitutes disbelief *(kufr)*; irrespective of whether the warning is for a major or minor sin.

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِۦ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
اكْتَسَبُوا ۖ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَسْـَٔلُوا اللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَـَٔاتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا ﴿٣٣﴾

(32) Do not desire the things by which Allāh has favoured some of you over others. For men shall be a portion of that which they earn, and for women shall be a portion of that which they earn. Ask Allāh for his favours. Indeed Allāh is the Knower of all things. (33) For each person We have appointed heirs of that which parents and relatives leave. Give the dues to those with whom you have made a covenant. Verily Allāh is Witness over everything.

DO NOT DESIRE THOSE THINGS THAT ALLĀH HAS CONFERRED UPON OTHERS

A narration of Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه is reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.420*) in which Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Men fight in Jihād *(religion war)* whereas we do not. They also receive twice our share of inheritance. If we were men, then we would also fight in Jihād *(religion war)* and receive inheritance equal to theirs." On this occasion the above verse was revealed.

Certain commentators have reported that when the verse, " *For a male shall be the like share of two females,"* was revealed, the women said, "We deserve a greater share because we are weak and men are strong. They are more capable of earning then we are." On this occasion, the above verse was revealed.

According ,to another narration, when the above verse of inheritance was revealed, some men expressed the desire that their rewards also be doubled. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse, *"For men shall be a portion of that which they earn, and for women shall be a portion of that which they earn."*

"Indeed Allāh is the Knower of all things." Allāh decrees every injunction with perfect wisdom. He has placed every person in their unique situation, granting them individual capabilities. According to these, Allāh has assigned different tasks to each individual. If every person was of the same gender, possessing the same capabilities, there would be gross imbalance in society.

Success in the Hereafter depends on a person's actions and sincerity. Each person shall receive the rewards promised by Allāh according to the level of his sincerity, whether the person be male or female.

The instruction not to desire the lot of others refers to those matters that are out of one's reach. He should endeavour to compete with others in matters wherein he has a choice. However, his endeavours should be free of jealousy,

boastfulness and self-praise. The Qur'ān encourages competition in good deeds.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh will record the person with the following two qualities as a grateful and patient person. (1) He who looks up to those who supersede him in religious matters, and attempts to emulate them. (2) He who looks at those less fortunate than him in worldly matters and shows gratitude to Allāh for giving him more. On the contrary, the person who looks down upon those lower than him in religious matters and, in worldly matters, looks at those more fortunate than him, Allāh shall not regard him as grateful and patient." [*Mishkāt. p. 448*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is also reported to have said that the best of people are those whom Allāh had given knowledge and wealth and they spend it in the right causes, joining family ties and fulfilling the rights of Allāh. Then there are those whom Allāh has granted knowledge, but no wealth. They have the sincere aspiration in their hearts to do as the other group does if they also possessed the wealth. The reward of this group is equal to that of the first group. [*Mishkāt p.451*]

"Ask Allāh for His favours." A person should keep trying to do that which he can and, at the same time, continue begging from Allāh for His bounties. The ability, inspiration to carry out an action and to show gratitude are all from Allāh's bounty. So too is His acceptance and the inspiration to do more.

Since some women mentioned that they deserve a greater share because of their weakness, Allāh says, *"For each person We have appointed heirs of that which parents and relatives leave."* The specification of the various shares is based on Allāh's wisdom. As He had decreed, so should the estate be dissolved, for in this lies great good and benefit.

THE INHERITANCE OF THE "MOWLAL MAWĀLĀT"

"Give the dues to those with whom you have made a covenant." This verse refers to the "Mowlal Mawālāt". During the period of ignorance, people often made a contract with each other that if either of them had to pay a penalty, the other would assist him. When either one died, then the other would inherit from him as well. Both these people were referred to as Mowlal Mawālāt.

There exists a difference of opinion whether such a contract is valid in Islām or not. According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه each of them may inherit from the other only if the deceased has no surviving relatives, neither As'hābul Faraidh, nor Asabāt, nor Dhawil Arhām. Either party has the option to annul the contract as long as neither has paid a penalty on behalf of the other.

According to Sayyidina Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه and Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه, none may inherit from the other, even of there are no surviving heirs. In this case, the estate will be given to the public treasury.

Imām Abu Bakr Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes that the above verse substantiates the contract of the Mowlal Mawālāt and no other verse nor hadith has abrogated it. It is further substantiated by the verse, *"The uterine relatives (Dhawil Arhām) are more deserving, in the book of Allāh, than the believers and immigrants."* This is

precisely in accordance with the ruling of Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه since he is of the opinion that the Uterine relatives (*Dhawil Arham*) are more deserving than the Mowlal Mawālāt, and the latter will only inherit in the absence of the former [*Ahkamul Qur'ān v.2 p. 186*]. The majority of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم also accepted the validity of the Mowlal Mawālāt contract. [*Madārikut Tanzīl*]

"Verily Allāh is Witness over everything." None can hide from Allāh, and He shall give every person his just dues.

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ ۚ فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَٱلَّٰتِى تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِى ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۖ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿34﴾

(34) Man are the leaders of women because of the virtue Allāh has bestowed some of you over others, and because of what men spend from their wealth. So the pious women are obedient and, in the absence of their husbands, are protective because of that which Allāh has protected. As for those whose evil disposition you fear, advise them, separate your bed from theirs and (gently) rap them. If they obey you then look for no excuse (to persecute them). Verily Allāh is Most High, The Greatest.

A WORD OF ADVICE TO THE MARRIED COUPLE

With regard to the circumstances of revelation, Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه has narrated the following incident. When a person once slapped his wife, she reported the episode to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed that she settle the matter by slapping him in retaliation. On this occasion the above verse was revealed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then commented, "We had decided something, but Allāh desired another." [*Asbābun Nuzūl p. 145*]

MEN ARE THE LEADERS OF WOMEN

"Man are the overseers of women because of the virtue Allāh has bestowed some of you over others..." This is the first reason for Allāh's choice of man as the overseer and leader of the woman. Allāh has bestowed men with understanding and insight, by virtue of which they are able to gauge the depths and intricacies of matters. While many women are also able to accomplish this feat, the average woman cannot do it as efficiently as most men.

If any difference has to taken, the man has the final say and his decision is binding on his wife.

The second reason given by Allāh is, *"because of what men spend from their wealth."* Since it is the responsibility of the man to provide for his wife and family, it is only logical that they be obedient to him. It is not becoming of any

woman to take from the husband and still disobey him. The pious woman realises that she should be obedient to the order of Allāh and obey her husband.

"So the pious women are obedient and, in the absence of their husbands, are protective because of that which Allāh has protected." This means that they protect the wealth, property and children of their husbands as well as their own chastity by not allowing other men to enter the house. This they should do because Allāh had protected their rights by enforcing the dowry on the husband and enjoining on him to provide for her. Certain commentators interpret the verse to mean that she should protect these things because Allāh has protected her.

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who are the best of women. He replied that she was the woman who pleased her husband when he looks at her. She is obedient to his every order and does not belie him with regard to herself and his property. (She does nothing to displease him). [*Mishkāt p.283*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who possesses four things has accumulated the good of both worlds. (1) A grateful heart, (2) A tongue ever involved in the remembrance of Allāh, (3) A body that is able to endure hardships, and (4) A wife who does not betray her husband with regard to her person and his property." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best of women who mount camels (Arab women) are those women of the Quraish who are most compassionate towards their infant children and most protective of the wealth of their husbands." [*Bukhari v.2 p.760*]

These Ahādīth make it evident that it is the duty of every good woman that she safeguards the property of her husband and does not spend it extravagantly. She should also rear the children and protect her chastity. A man is unable to remain at home all the time and has to be out to earn a living and for other tasks. On these occasions, the wife should ensure that she looks after all his possessions. She must see to the nurturing of the children and their education because without this they will be heading for destruction.

GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH DISOBEDIENT WIVES

"As for those whose evil disposition you fear, advise them (if they still do not take heed), separate your bed from theirs and (this should be sufficient for any decent woman, but if she still takes no heed, then gently) rap them."

In his farewell sermon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Fear Allāh with regard to your women for you have acquired them through a pledge between you and Allāh, and you have secured sexual pleasures from them according to the Shari'ah of Allāh. They owe you the right that none occupy your bed whom you (due to natural possessiveness) dislike. If they do so, then you may hit them in such a way that no bones are broken (i.e. no injury is inflicted). You owe them the right that you feed and clothe them in a good manner." [*Muslim v.1 p.397*]

It is apparent from this that a person may not hit his wife in any way that will inflict an injury. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.25*) writes that the three courses of action stipulated in the verse are mentioned in sequence. Each should

be employed only when the previous one fails.

"If they obey you then look for no excuse (to persecute them)." This verse advises those people who unnecessarily taunt and abuse their wives, finding the smallest excuses to punish them. Those who oppress the weak ones should bear in mind that soon they will have to present themselves before Allāh, and *"Verily Allāh is Most High, The Greatest."* Allāh exercises greater power over a person than any man can ever hope to exercise over his subordinates.

A WARNING AGAINST WIFE BEATING

This verse teaches the husband that he should, in the event of a dispute advise the wife kindly, failing which he may separate their beds. Under no circumstances should he leave the house because such behaviour is fraught with danger.

Sayyidina Mu'āwiya Qushairi رضی الله عنه reports that he asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم concerning the rights of women. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Their rights are that you feed them when you eat and clothe them when you clothe yourself. You may not hit them on their faces, nor address them using bad words. Sever relations with them while still sharing the same house." [*Abu Dawūd v.1 p.291*]

A woman should be rapped only when absolutely necessary, and then too without causing injury and without striking the face. Sayyidina Iyās bin Abdullāh رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them not to beat their wives. Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه later came to Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم complaining that their wives now grew bold (since they were aware of the injunction). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then permitted it. Later the women began remonstrating against their husbands. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Many women have approached the wives of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم complaining about their husbands. These men are not the best of you!" [*Abu Dawūd v.1 p.292*]

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.25*) writes that to endure the irritations of the wife is better than resorting to hitting her. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zam'ah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not beat your wives like people beat their slaves, for at the end of the day, you will have to satisfy your passions with her." [*Bukhari v.2 p.784*]

This hadith serves to explain to the man that he is eventually in need of his wife. It seems ridiculous that at one instance he is beating her and the next instance he is making love to her! The wife will also lose respect for him, thinking that he treats her kindly sometimes, and at other times he behaves worse than a beast. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" then makes mention of four reasons that may warrant a man rapping his wife. They are:

1. *If she refuses to beautify herself for him.*
2. *If she refuses to cohabit with him when he calls (without reason).*
3. *If she refuses to perform her obligatory (Fardh) Salāh or to*

bath.

4. *If she goes out of the home without a valid excuse.*

He may also rap her for any other reason similar to the above.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَٱبْعَثُوا۟ حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِۦ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَآ إِن يُرِيدَآ إِصْلَـٰحًا يُوَفِّقِ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

(35) If you fear a breach between the couple, then appoint an arbitrator from his family and an arbitrator from her family. If they both desire reformation, Allāh will reconcile them. Verily Allāh is All Knowing, Mindful.

IF A COUPLE DISPUTE, TWO ARBITRATORS SHOULD BE APPOINTED TO RECONCILE THEM

If disputes arise between two acquaintances, one can well imagine the situation between a couple who live together day and night. These are inevitable. The sensible couple will resolve these between themselves as if nothing has transpired at all. However, it may occur that matters deteriorate to such an extent that a third party needs to step in to resolve the matter. Allāh has indicated towards this state of affairs in the above verse.

"If you fear a breach between the couple, then appoint an arbitrator from his family and an arbitrator from her family." These two will listen to both sides of the story. They should then advise the one who is at fault and do their best to resolve the dispute. They should not do or say anything that may aggravate the situation. If their intentions are sincere and they truly desire that the couple harmonise, Allāh will see to the rest, as He says, *"If they both desire reformation, Allāh will reconcile them."* If any of those involved distort the situation in any way, they should bear in mind that Allāh shall take them to task for this, for *"Verily Allāh is All Knowing, Mindful."*

When a dispute drags on for too long and the couple behave unjustly towards each other, they eventually lose interest in each other. To add fuel to the fire, the families of the couple step in to defend their own and, instead of reconciling the two, make the situation worse. Finally, the couple is so far distanced that there exists no possibility of amendment. This often results in divorce.

The procedure outlined by Allāh in this verse is best to curb any pending separation. For the families to incite the situation further is in contrast to the teachings of Islām and will result in grievous consequences in both the worlds.

۞ وَٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَـٰنًا وَبِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ وَٱلْجَارِ ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْجَارِ ٱلْجُنُبِ وَٱلصَّاحِبِ

بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا
فَخُورًا ﴿٣٦﴾ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا
آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿٣٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ وَمَن يَكُنِ
الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنفَقُوا
مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِن تَكُ
حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

(36) Worship Allāh, ascribe none as partner to Him and show kindness to parents, relatives, orphans, the destitute, near neighbours, distant neighbours, close associates, travellers and those in your possession. Verily Allāh does not like the one who is proud and boastful... (37) Those who are miserly, instruct others to be miserly and conceal what Allāh had conferred on them through His bounty. We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgracing punishment. (38) Those who spend their wealth to show people and do not believe in Allāh, nor in the Last Day. The one whose friend is Satan (Shaytān), then he is the worst of friends indeed. (39) What harm will it do them if they believe in Allāh and the Last Day and spend of that which Allāh had provided for them? Allāh is Ever Aware of them. (40) Undoubtedly Allāh does not even oppress the weight of an atom. If it be a good deed, He shall multiply it and confer from His side a tremendous reward.

KINDNESS TOWARDS PARENTS, RELATIVES, NEIGHBOURS, ORPHANS, THE POOR AND TRAVELLERS

"Worship Allāh, ascribe none as partner to Him..." Allāh has created man to worship only Him and reminds him of this responsibility time and again in the Qur'ān. The greatest form of worship is belief in Tauhīd *(the Oneness of Allāh)* and this is annulled by polytheism *(shirk)*. Therefore, Allāh constantly warns man against polytheism *(shirk)*.

Thereafter Allāh reminds man of his rights towards fellow man. The first to receive mention are *"and show kindness to parents."* The same subject is repeated in Surah Baqarah, Surah An'ām and Surah Isrā (Surah Bani Isrā'īl). This includes serving them, alleviating their burdens, and showing every type of obedience, except when it constitutes disobedience to Allāh. One may refer to the lengthy discussion on this subject in Surah Baqarah.

".....relatives..." Cordial ties should always be maintained with them and this is emphasised in the Shari'ah. Much has already been mentioned with regard to this at the beginning of this Surah.

".....orphans, the destitute..." These have also been discussed in Surah

Baqarah.

"...near neighbours, distant neighbours, close associates, travellers..." A person has to behave cordially towards all of Allāh's creation. These few have been mentioned in this verse because a person associates with them on a regular basis.

CORDIAL BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS NEIGHBOURS

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Jibr'īl علیه السلام advised so often to behave well towards neighbours that I thought that he will soon make them my heirs!" [*Bukhari p.889*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The best neighbour in the sight of Allāh is he who fosters the best relationship and displays the best character towards his neighbours." [Tirmidhi]

A person once asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم how was he to know whether he was behaving well. Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "When you hear that your neighbours are speaking highly of you, then you have done well. If you hear that your neighbours are speaking ill of you, then understand that you have done wrong." [*Mishkāt p.424*]

A hadith reads that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم once said, "The person who believes in Allāh and the last day should not inconvenience his neighbours. The person who believes in Allāh and the last day should speak good or remain silent." [*Bukhari v.2 p.889*]

According to another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "I swear by Allāh that he is not a believer *(Mu'min)*! I swear by Allāh that he is not a believer *(Mu'min)*! I swear by Allāh that he is not a believer *(Mu'min)*!" When someone asked to whom he was referring to, Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied, "The person whose neighbours are not safe from his evil." [*Ibid*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم also mentioned that the person whose neighbour is not safe from his evil shall not enter Heaven *(Jannah)*.' [*Muslim v.1 p.50*]

Many people, despite being particular about their optional *(Nafl)* devotions, do not pay heed to fulfillling the rights of their neighbours, although this is more important. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه reports that someone enquired from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم regarding a certain woman who was known to be very meticulous in her worship by performing excessive Salāh, fasting and charity. She however, used to hurt her neighbours with her tongue. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied that she was destined for the fire of Hell. The person then continued to enquire about another woman who, although she observed few fasts, Salāhs and gave in charity only some pieces of cheese, yet she caused no harm to her neighbours. Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied that she was destined for Heaven *(Jannah)*. [*Mishkāt p.425*]

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates that he heard Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم say, "That person is not a believer *(Mu'min)* who eats to his fill while his neighbour goes hungry." [*Mishkāt p. 424*]

Although all neighbours need to be cared for, those who are closest receive

priority when giving something. Sayyidina abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"When you cook a meal, add more water to the gravy and consider your neighbour."* [*Muslim p.329*]

Once Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to which of her neighbours should she give a gift. He told her to give it to the one whose door was closest to her. [*Bukhari v.2 p.890*]

The close neighbour referred to in the verse may also be interpreted to mean the neighbour who happens to be a relative as well. This is reported from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه. He will, therefore, have a two-fold right over a person.

The "associate" referred to in the verse may also mean the person with whom one consults. Whatever they discuss should be regarded as a trust and must not be disclosed to others. Tales should not be carried.

Some commentators have mentioned that the "associate" may also refer to a travelling companion. He must be treated cordially, be he a relative or not. If there is a restriction in space, he should be made comfortable, so that his journey be pleasant. He should neither be hurt physically nor verbally. The instruction in this verse also refers to behaving well towards those with whom one works. [*Rūhul; Ma'āni*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the best of companions is he who behaves best towards his companions. [*Mishkāt p.424*]

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'ad رضى الله عنه reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The leader of a party on a journey is the one who serves them. The one who excels in serving his companions cannot attain an action superior to this unless he becomes a martyr." [*Mishkāt p.340*]

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه has interpreted the "associate" to mean the wife. This seems closest to the Qur'ānic words. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.435*) writes that the traveller referred to in the verse has been interpreted by most commentators to mean a guest. Whether the traveller is a guest or not, he should still be treated warmly and assisted in every possible manner. This action holds much reward in the Hereafter.

TREATING THE SLAVES WELL

"....and those in your possession." This refers to slaves who must also be treated amicably and their food and clothing duly provided. In no way should they be oppressed and should never be given more work than they can manage.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed these slaves are your brothers and servants whom Allāh has placed at your disposal. So the one who has a slave in his possession should feed him from that which he himself eats and clothe him as he clothes himself. They should not be given more work than they are capable of. If you give them more than they can manage, you should assist them." [*Bukhari p.346*]

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whosoever punishes his slave for something that he is not guilty of or slaps him, then the expiation for this is that he sets him free." [*Muslim v.2 p.51*]

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who does not treat his slave well shall not enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidah Umm Salama رضى الله عنها narrates that on his deathbed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم enjoined the performance of Salāh and cordial treatment of slaves. [*Mishkāt p.291*]

ABOMINATION OF PRIDE

"Verily Allāh does not like the one who is proud and boastful..." This portion of the verse admonishes those who consider themselves above others and are intoxicated by their own airs. This subject is discussed in Surah Luqman and Surah Hadīd as well. Pride and haughtiness are truly devastating diseases of the heart and are the cause of many sins. It leads a person to hanker after fame, to be boastful in his actions, to practise deviant customs upon the occasion of marriage, fearing what people will say if he does not do these things.

PRIDE CAUSES A PERSON TO SUSPEND HIS GARMENTS BELOW THE ANKLES

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that Allāh will not look at that person with mercy who, because of pride, allows his garments to drag on the ground. [*Bukhari p.861*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The lower garment of a believer *(Mu'min)* (male) should be in the middle of his calf and there is no harm if it is between this point and the ankle. Whatever is below this shall lead one to the Fire. Allāh shall not look at that person with mercy who allows the garment to hang below the ankles out of pride." [*Abu Dawūd v.2 Fg.2 10*]

This sin cited above applies to all garments, be they trousers, lūngis, kurtas, etc. [*Ibid*]

Amongst the advice that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave Sayyidina Jābir bin Sulaim رضى الله عنه was, "Guard against hanging the garments below the ankles, for indeed it stems from pride and Allāh does not like pride." [*Ibid p.210*]

In the last hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that this action stems from pride. Those perpetrating this sin consider it degrading to wear their garments above their ankles. They will never dare walk in this way in public. This is a clear indication that they allow their garments (especially trousers) to hang below the ankles out of pride, even though they deny it.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم narrated an incident of a person from the previous nations who, due to pride, walked about with his garments below his ankles. The ground swallowed him up and until the day of Qiyamah, he will continue being swallowed up in this manner. [*Bukhari v.2 p.861*]

SOME BRANCHES OF PRIDE

Numerous evils develop from pride. One of these is when people refuse to accept the truth even after the error of their ways has been made known to them. They are adamant to practise the wrong and continue to challenge the truth. They consider it below their dignity to practise the Shari'ah *(Islamic laws)* and do not leave their sinful ways, fearing the reaction of mere mortals.

A Companion (Sahabi) رضى الله عنهم once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "A person likes his clothing and shoes to be nice (is this due to pride)?" the reply was, "Allāh is beautiful and likes things of beauty. Pride is to challenge the truth and to consider others as inferior. [*Muslim v.1 p.65*]

Together with pride, boastfulness and vainglorious attitudes are also condemned in this verse. It is common for people to boast about their achievements, even if the praise is misdirected. They are proud of what they do, not realising that whatever they have done has been conferred on them by Allāh. They are merely the humble servants of Allāh.

It should never cross a person's mind that those people whom Allāh has not bestowed with His favours are less fortunate than himself. Allāh gives whom He wills and may choose not to give others because of His infinite wisdom. A servant of Allāh should think that he is merely the humble slave of his Master and never look down upon others.

In this regard, the author of "Rūhul Ma'aani" writes that the proud and arrogant person does not consider his relatives and neighbours. He only blows his own trumpet and sings his own praises before them. In this way, he neglects his duties towards them and shows disregard for the injunctions of Allāh to maintain cordial relations with them.

Those who are proud never want to extend any help to others out of fear that they may match them. They desire that these people remain where they are so that they may never present any competition. A wealthy brother never likes to visit his poor brother, considering this below his dignity. His pride will always be an obstacle to the fostering of good relations.

THE ABOMINATION OF MISERLINESS

"Those who are miserly instruct others to be miserly and conceal what Allāh has conferred on them through His bounty." This verse is an extension of the last and continues to describe those who are proud and boastful. They neither spend on their relatives and the needy, nor do they allow others to do so. Those who do not like to spend for the sake of Allāh grow to dislike the spending of others as well.

Allāh says in Surah Fajr, *"You never honour the orphan, never encourage (others) to feed the poor, you devour inheritance with relish and love wealth with a very deep love."* [*Surah 89, verses 17 to 20*]

Misers never show gratitude to Allāh for what He has given them, neither do they spend on His creation. They never think where the wealth has come from and that they owe it to Allāh that they spend in ways that He is pleased

with.

"We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgracing punishment." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that *"disbelievers"* in this context refers to those who are ungrateful to Allāh. The common meaning of kāfir (*disbeliever*) may also be implied. He goes on to narrate that the Jews used to frequently visit the Christians and, pretending to be concerned, would advise them not to spend their wealth so freely for they fear that their wealth will soon expire. They told them that the future was uncertain and they should rather conserve what they have. With reference to this Allāh revealed the above verse viz. *"Those who are miserly, instruct others to be miserly...* (till the verse)... *Allāh is Ever Aware of them."* With this incident in mind, the meaning of *"disbelievers"* is understood.

THE ABOMINATION OF SPENDING PRETENTIOUSLY

"Those who spend their wealth to show people and do not believe in Allāh, nor the Last Day." This verse is also part of the description of those who are *"proud and boastful."* The verse depicting the punishment awaiting the disbelievers was mentioned incidentally.

The only time when these people will spend is when it earns them a reputation. They spend only so that people may be impressed by their wealth and heap praises upon them. If they believed in Allāh and the Last Day, they would not be so vain. Then they would have acted in anticipation of the rewards promised by Allāh, knowing that the day will drawn wherein they shall receive the full recompense of their deeds.

"The one whose friend is Satan (Shaytān), then he is the worst of friends indeed." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that this verse refers'to Iblīs *(Devil),* his comrades and all those who pander to his wishes. The carnal passions are also implied, together with all the men and Jinn who act deviously. They are described as the worst of friends because they are always encouraging others to sin, thereby leading them to the fire of Hell.

"What harm will it do them if they believe in Allāh and the Last Day and spend of that which Allāh has provided for them? Allāh is Ever Aware of them." This purpose of this question is to censure the disbelievers and to inject concern within them about their plight in the Hereafter. If they ponder awhile, they will realise that their code of conduct is indeed incorrect and that they have no alternative but to adopt the ways of Belief *(Imān).*

"Undoubtedly Allāh does not oppress even the weight of an atom." Allāh will never punish a person for something that he never did. In a like manner, no action of a person's will go unnoticed by Allāh. Every deed will earn its reward. In fact, Allāh will multiply the reward many times over.

The minimum reward for every action will be tenfold, as Allāh says on Surah An'ām,. *"Whosoever does a good deed will receive tenfold the like thereof"* [*Surah 6, verse 160*]. Allāh may then multiply this seven, seventy, seven hundred and many more times over. Alas! Because the measly world is before us, people hanker only after it, depriving themselves of deeds and subjecting themselves to sinful behaviour.

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍۭ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٤١﴾

(41) How will it be when We shall bring forth from every nation a witness and call you [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] to witness over all of them?

EVERY UMMAH SHALL HAVE A WITNESS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYAMAH)*

This verse depicts the scene on the Day of Judgment. Every Prophet عليه السلام will bring forth his Ummah and give testimony with regard to their beliefs and actions. Then the illustrious Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم will be summoned to testify about the veracity of these prophets عليهم السلام. This episode has been dealt with in detail in Surah Baqarah under the verse, *"So that you* [the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *may be witness over the people and the messenger a witness over you."* [*Surah 1, verse 143*]

When the Ummahs of the previous prophets عليهم السلام refute the invitation of their respective prophets عليهم السلام, the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will be summoned to attest to the truthfulness of these prophets عليهم السلام. Then Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself will testify to the honesty of his Ummah.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked him to recite the Qur'ān to him. He said, "Should I recite to you when it was revealed to you?" Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم "Yes, I enjoy listening to the recitation of others." Thereupon Sayyidina Ibn Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه began reciting Surah Nisā till he reached the verse, *"How will it be when We shall bring forth from every nation a witness and call you [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] to witness over all of them."* At this point, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him to stop reciting. He says that when he looked up, he saw that tears were flowing from the eyes of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [*Bukhari v.2 p.659*]

After recounting this hadith, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that if this is the condition of the witness (that he weeps upon calling this scene to mind), what should be the reaction of those for whom testimony has to be given?

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَعَصَوُا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّىٰ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ ٱللَّهَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٤٢﴾

(42) On that day, those who disbelieved and disobeyed the messenger will wish that the earth is levelled upon them. They will not be able to hide anything from Allāh.

THE DESIRE OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYAMAH)*

This verse paints a picture of the severity and grief of the Day of judgment *(Qiyamah)*. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* will wish that they were rather buried and

that the earth was heaped upon them so that they will not have to endure the day. Nothing will be hidden from Allāh because even their limbs will testify against them.

At times they will swear that they never committed polytheism *(shirk)*, but when their limbs testify, they will be forced to admit their guilt. It is then that they will wish that the ground is levelled over them.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا۟ مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِى سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا۟ ۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلْغَآئِطِ أَوْ لَٰمَسْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا۟ مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا۟ صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَٱمْسَحُوا۟ بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

(43) O you who believe! Do not draw near to Salāh when you are intoxicated until you are aware of what you say, and (do) not (approach Salāh) when you are impure, except for the traveller, till you bath. If you are ill, on journey, returning from the toilet or from touching your women, and you do not find any water, then use clean soil to wipe your faces and arms. Verily Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most forgiving.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST PERFORMING SALĀH WHILE INTOXICATED

During the initial stages of Islām, intoxicants were permitted. Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه narrates that he was once invited for a meal by Sayyidina Abdur Rahman bin Auf رضی الله عنه. Wine was also served and everyone got drunk. When the time of Salāh entered, they appointed him as Belief *(Imān)*. He began to recite Surah Kāfirūn and read, "I worship what you worship" instead of *"I do not worship what you worship"*. This contorted the meaning of the verse and it was on this occasion that Allāh revealed the above verse stating, *"O you who believe! Do. not draw near to Salāh when you are intoxicated until you are aware of what you say..."* [*Tirmidhi*]

It was after this that the explicit verses were revealed which forbade wine. This is discussed in Surah Mā'idah where Allāh says, *"O you who believe, indeed wine, gambling, idols and charmed arrows are impurities of Satan (Shaytān), so abstain therefrom..."* [*Surah 5, verse 90*].

According to another narration, Sayyidina Asla bin Sharīk رضی الله عنه reports that he used to tie the saddle on the camel of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم. One night he was in need of a bath, but feared that he may fail seriously ill or even die on account of the extreme cold. When he asked Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم concerning this, the above verse was revealed, whereby Tayammum was permitted.

THE LAWS OF TAYAMMUM

This verse as well as another in Surah Mā'idah explain the practice of Tayammum. It is gathered from both these verses that Tayammum can be made in the absence of water, when a person is ill or when he has a shortage of water on a journey. It may substitute the obligatory bath as well as ablution *(wudhu)*. When a person is in need of an obligatory bath, he is termed to be in the state of Hadath Akbar, and when in need of ablution *(wudhu)*, he is termed to be in the state of Hadath Asghar.

In the absence of water Salāh may not be omitted. Allāh has rather allowed the performance of Tayammum. Just as it is Unlawful *(Harām)* to perform Salāh while in the states of Hadath Akbar or Hadath Asghar, so too is it Unlawful *(Harām)* to delay performance of the Salāh till after its appointed time.

The term *"impure"* denotes the state of Hadath Akbar, while *"returning from the toilet"* refers to Hadath Asghar. According to Sayyidina Ali and Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه, the term *"touching your women* refers to the state of Hadath Akbar, since this alludes to intercourse. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه is of the opinion that the verse means that when a person touches a woman directly, his ablution *(wudhu)* will be nullified. This is also the ruling of Imām Shāfi'ī رحمة الله عليه and others.

According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, ablution *(wudhu)* will not be nullified by touching a woman since the interpretation of the verse is as explained by Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would perform his Salāh at nights while she was lying in front of him like a corpse. When he performed the Witr Salāh, he would touch her feet. [*Nasā'ī p.38*] This hadith substantiates the fact that ablution *(wudhu)* is not nullified by touching a woman.

Tayammum is permitted in three instances. These are (1) in the absence of water, (2) when one is ill and (3) when one is travelling. The details of these are explained in the books of jurisprudence. In brief the following points should be borne in mind.

⇒ *The absence of water does not mean that there is no Water at the place where one is to perform Salāh. The person should search in the vicinity (within a radius of approximately 2,5 km). He has to acquire the water even of he has to pay for it. However, if he cannot attain the water despite its presence (e.g. there is a well but no bucket), then he will be permitted to make Tayammum.*

⇒ *The person who is ill can also perform Tayammum when the illness is of such a nature that water will aggravate it.*

⇒ *Tayammum may be performed if the water is extremely cold and there is no way to heat it. 'The person fears that by using the water, his illness may be intensified or a limb or his life may be lost in the process.*

⇒ *Traveller may also perform Tayammum when he cannot find water. There are various rules governing this situation as well e.g. he should attempt to search for water or acquire it from his fellow travellers. If he can purchase the water, he should do so even if the price be slightly higher than usual.*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "I have been privileged above the other Prophet with six things viz. (1) I have been granted concise speech, (2) I have been assisted with awe (i.e. Allāh has cast awe into the hearts of my enemies so that they desist from attacking me), (3) The spoils of war have been declared permissible for me, (4) The entire earth has been made a place of worship for me and a means of attaining purity (by virtue of Tayammum), *(5)* I have been sent as a prophet to the entire mankind (the previous Prophet رضى الله عنه were restricted to their particular nations), and (6) The coming of any other prophet has been terminated by my advent since there shall be no prophet after me" [Mishkāt p.5 12]. Although this particular hadith cites only six things, other Ahādīth mention many more.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Pure soil will purify a believer *(Mu'min)* even if he does not find water for ten years. When he does find water, he should use it." [*Tirmidhi*]

THE METHOD OF TAYAMMUM

The above verse and verse 6 of Surah Mā'idah describe that the face and the arms should be 'wiped' with the soil. The Ahādīth describe that a person should strike his hands on the soil and then pass these hands over the face. Thereafter, he should strike the soil again and pass them over each arm up to the elbows, as he would do in ablution *(wudhu)*.

It is imperative that the intention of Tayammum be made when performing Tayammum. Therefore, a person will not be considered to have performed Tayammum if his face and hands become covered in dust without him intending it.

"Verily Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Forgiving." Allāh is so Clement that he instituted the performance of Tayammum in the absence of water as a concession to alleviate the states of Hadath Asghar *(minor impurity)* and Hadath Akbar *(major impurity)*. (The method of performing Tayammum for both states of Hadath *(impurity)* is the same).

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ نَصِيبًا مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ يَشْتَرُونَ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن تَضِلُّوا۟
ٱلسَّبِيلَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَآئِكُمْ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ نَصِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ
هَادُوا۟ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِۦ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَٱسْمَعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ
وَرَٰعِنَا لَيًّۢا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنًا فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَٱسْمَعْ وَٱنظُرْنَا
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَٰكِن لَّعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

(44) Have you not seen those who have been given a portion of the Book, purchasing misguidance and hoping that you deviate from the path? (45) Allāh is well Aware of your enemies. Allāh suffices as a Protecting Friend and Allāh suffices as a Helper. (46) Some of the Jews alter words from their context and say, "We hear and we disobey and listen in a manner that you do not listen!" Distorting with their tongues and taunting the Dīn (religion) they say "Rā'inā." If only they said, "We hear and we obey!" "Do listen!" and "Do grant us consideration," it would have been better for them and more ethical. However, Allāh has cursed them because of their disbelief, so only a few of them believe.

THE MISCHIEF AND DEPRAVITY OF THE JEWS

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates in a report of Durrul Manthūr (*v.2 p.178*) that the chief of the Jews Rifā'ah bin Zaid, would frequent the gatherings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He would contort his tongue when speaking and taunted the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām and its injunctions. The above verses were revealed with reference to him.

The learned scholars of the Jews learnt from their scriptures about the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but altered the scripture to hide the fact. They did not believe in him, prevented their people from doing so and chose to deviate instead. Besides this, they also left no stone unturned to lead the Muslims astray. Allāh, however, puts the Muslims at ease by saying, *"Allāh is well Aware of your enemies. Allāh suffices as a Protecting Friend and Allāh suffices as a Helper."*

The Jews would distort their words when speaking to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that the words would take on a different meaning although not sounding defamatory. One of these words was "Rā'inā.' In Arabic, it means that people be given consideration, but in the Jewish language it was a curse for death. This has already been discussed in Surah Baqarah where Allāh says, *"O you who believe, say not Rā'inā..."* [*Surah 2, verse 104*].

They would say, *"We hear and we disobey..."* They made it sound as if they were saying that they heard what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to say and that they would disobey anything contrary to what he said. In their hearts, however, they intended not to listen to what Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to say.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to instruct the people to *"listen,"* the Jews would add the words *"in a manner that you do not listen!"* According to the author of *"Rūhul Ma'āni"*, this phrase could also have a good meaning if interpreted to mean *"in a manner that you (are not listening to offensive things)."* This was the meaning that they would have wanted others to take, but their words were intended to actually curse the people so that they lose their ability to hear.

Instead of adopting this vile behaviour *"if only they said, 'We hear and we obey! Do listen!' and 'Do grant us consideration,' it would have been better for them and more ethical. However, Allāh has cursed them because of their disbelief so only a few of them believe."*

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَارِهَآ أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلسَّبْتِ ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا (47)

(47) O you who have been given the scripture! Believe in what We have revealed, that verifies what is with you before We disfigure them as We had cursed the people of the Sabbath. The decree of Allāh shall be come to pass.

THE JEWS ARE ACCURSED

Durrul Manthūr (*v.2 p.168*) records the narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه in which he says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once addressed a congregation of Jewish leaders that included people like Abdullāh bin Sūriya and Ka'ab bin Asad. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them to fear Allāh and accept Islām since they knew that it was the truth. They said, "O Muhammad, we know nothing of this." On this occasion Allāh revealed the above verse telling them, *"O you who have been given the scripture! Believe in what We have revealed, that verifies what is with you* (the Torah Believe therein) *before We (as a punishment) disfigure faces, turning them around (towards the nape and then it shall be flat, without a sign of the nose, mouth and eyes), or We curse them as We had cursed the people of the Sabbath."*

The Jews were ordered to revere Saturdays and prohibited from fishing on that day. They disobeyed the order and were transformed into monkeys, as explained in Surah Baqarah (*verses 65/6*). Allāh reminds them of this shocking incident that occurred to their forebears, and was renowned amongst them. Details of this incident will also be mentioned in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verse 163 to 166*].

"The decree of Allāh shall come to pass." None can thwart the decree of Allāh when He ordains it.

The commentators have deliberated at length about the disfiguring of faces referred to in this verse; whether it had already happened or whether it was still to occur in the future. In brief, some are of the opinion that it did not happen because some Jews did convert to Islām. Others say that it is still to occur to the Jews before judgment *(Qiyamah)*.

There are some who maintain that Allāh mentioned two things in this verse; either the disfiguring of faces, or Allāh's curse. Since the curse had already befallen them, the second option (*disfiguring*) will not come to pass. Others say that the disfiguring shall still take place in the Hereafter.

Hakīmul Ummah Sayyidina Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has written that there is nothing to prove that this disfiguring will certainly happen if they do not believe. The verse states only the possibility of this happening.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱفْتَرَىٰٓ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

(48) Verily Allāh does not forgive that polytheism (shirk) be committed, but may forgive all sins besides this for whom He wills.

POLYTHEISM *(SHIRK)* IS AN EXTREMELY SEVERE SIN AND THE POLYTHEIST *(MUSHRIK)* WILL NOT BE FORGIVEN

This verse makes it clear that the person committing polytheism *(shirk)* will never be pardoned by Allāh if he dies in this condition. Besides this sin, Allāh may pardon any other sin if He wills. Allāh has created man, sustains him and sees to his every need. Despite all of this, man still seeks help from another and accords the type of respect reserved only for Allāh to another. Even logically this does not make sense. It is for this reason that the Qur'ān refutes polytheism *(shirk)* and warns against it in so many places.

Assuming that a person owns something and then people say that someone else is also a partner, one can well imagine the reaction of the owner. He will, naturally, be extremely upset even though he is the temporary owner in this transitory life. He is neither the permanent owner, nor the creator of the thing.

The entire creation is unable to create even a fly and are dependent totally on Allāh. They are all fraught with weaknesses and will eventually return to Him. It is, therefore, sheer foolishness that such feeble beings be made as partners to Allāh, the Most High.

Those who attribute children to Allāh are also considered to be polytheists *(Mushrikīn)*, such as the early Makkans who used to call the angels the daughters of Allāh and the Christians and Jews called Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام the Sons of Allāh respectively . They are all destined for the eternal fire of Hell.

OTHER DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* BESIDES THE MUSHRIKĪN WILL ALSO NOT BE FORGIVEN

This fact is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān. In Surah Ahzāb Allāh says, *"Indeed Allāh had cursed the disbelievers (kuffār) and prepared for them a blazing inferno wherein they will abide forever and ever. They will find no friend, nor any helper."* [*Surah 33, verses 64/5*]

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Verily those who disbelieves (kuffār) and oppress, it does not behove Allāh to forgive them, nor to guide them to any path except the path to Hell wherein they will abide forever and ever. That is all too easy for Allāh."* [*Surah 4, verse 168/9*]

All those people will be considered to be disbelievers *(kuffār)* who deny Allāh, Islām, the Qur'ān or any fundamental practice of Islām that is conclusively proven. So too are those who mock Islām and any of its injunctions and deny the finality of Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُم ۚ بَلِ ٱللَّهُ يُزَكِّى مَن يَشَآءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾
ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۖ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦٓ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾

(49) Have you not seen those who praise themselves for purity? Allāh purifies whomsoever He wills and does not oppress even by the amount of the string of a date seed.(50) See how they invent lies about Allāh. That suffices as a flagrant sin.

CENSURING OF THOSE JEWS WHO PRAISED THEMSELVES FOR PURITY

Like the previous verses, this verse continues to describe some of the atrocious behaviour of the Jews. "Rūhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه that this verse was revealed with reference to the Jews and the Christians. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah *"The Jews and the Christians say, 'We are the children of Allāh and His loved ones!"* [*Surah 5, verse 18*]. Another of their boastful claims was, "None shall ever enter Heaven *(Jannah)* except of he be a Jew or a Christian" [*Surah Baqarah, verse 111*].

In this way, they used to praise their piety and purity even though they were disbelievers *(kuffār)* and sinners. Therefore Allāh asks if one has seen those who perpetrate this audacity by making claims that they are not worthy of. Their claims will neither save them nor grant them any benefit since Allāh knows the condition of every heart and soul. He knows the end result of every person, so whoever He praises will certainly be worthy of Heaven *(Jannah)*. Whatever retribution He gives will be perfectly just and He cannot oppress anyone in the least.

The Arabs use the word "naqīr," "fatīl" and "qitmīr" to describe something insignificant. A "naqīr" is the incision on the date seed, "fatīl" is the string that is found there (as translated in the above verse) and "qitmīr" is the skin of the date seed. All these words appear in the Qur'ān.

"See how they invent lies about Allāh." By claiming that they are the beloved of Allāh, they are actually claiming that Allāh likes disbelief (*kufr*)! To fulfill their vain desires, they slander Allāh. *"That suffices as a flagrant sin."*

THE NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE OF PURIFYING THE SOUL

It is of utmost importance to eradicate all evil characteristics from the soul. This is part of the duty of prophethood, as Allāh says, "..... *he teaches them the Book, wisdom and purifies them."* Those who will attempt to rid themselves of immoral traits and evil habits according to the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have been praised by Allāh. He says, *"Those who are pure have indeed succeeded."*

Those who assume that they are pure while they are not really so, have perpetrated a double sin. In addition to being bad, they perpetrate the sin of lying when they act as if they are good. Allāh says in Surah Najm, *"Do not praise yourselves for purity. He* (Allāh) *knows best who is pious."* [*Surah 53, verse 32*].

PROHIBITION AGAINST PRAISING ONE'S SELF

Even if a person practices good deeds and abstains from evil, he will still be lacking in something. He can never know in what condition he will meet his end. Therefore, he cannot praise himself at all. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even disapproved when people to adopted names that seemed to praise them.

Sayyidina Zainab bint Abi Sama رضى الله عنه narrates that her name was Barrah (meaning a pious woman). When Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم heard of this he said, "Do not praise yourselves for purity for only Allāh knows who is pious. Call her Zaynab." [*Muslim v.2 p.208*]

THE PERMISSION TO SPEAK OF ALLĀH'S BOUNTIES

A person is allowed to speak of a bounty that Allāh has conferred on him. However, he should ensure that he is not fooling himself and that his speech is not merely to praise himself.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ نَصِيبًا مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْجِبْتِ وَٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥١﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ نَصِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

(51) Have you not seen those who have been given a portion of the Book, they believe in the idols and Devil (Shaytān) and say with regard to those who disbelieve that they are better guided than the believers? (52) These are the ones whom Allāh has cursed. You shall never find a helper for those whom Allāh has cursed.

THE AUDACITY OF THE JEWS WHO SAID THAT POLYTHEISM *(SHIRK)* IS BETTER THAN BELIEF *(IMĀN)*

A narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه is reported in "Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.71*) where he says that the leaders and scholars of the Jewish Banu Nadhir tribe once came to Makkah. The Quraish told each other to question these people whether their Dīn *(religion)* was better or that of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم since the Jews were reputed to have the knowledge of the previous scriptures.

When the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* asked this question to the Jews, the Jews [knowing that these people were Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* and far away from the Deen of Sayyidina Ibrahīm [عليه السلام], replied that they [the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)*] were more rightly guided than the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his followers. On this occasion, the above verse was revealed.

The Jews were fully aware of the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and even awaited him anxiously. They recognised him from his description in their scriptures but, excluding a few, they did not accept Islām. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"When that came to them which they recognised they rejected it. The*

curse of Allāh is on the disbelievers." [*Surah 2, verse 89*]

Despite not believing, the Jews even had the audacity to tell the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* that they were better than the Muslims! When one's whims and obstinacy find a place in the heart of a person, it blindfolds the eyes of his heart and causes him to refute the truth.

Any person with any knowledge of the previous scriptures understands that all the Prophet عليه السلام preached oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and that Belief *(Imān)* was the worst crime any person could perpetrate. It was, therefore, only obstinacy that prompted them to tell the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* what they did.

THE MEANING OF "JIBT" AND "TAGHŪT"

The commentators differ with regard to the meaning of these two words used in this verse. Some are of the opinion that "jibt" (translated above as *idols* was the name of a particular idol and later all idols were called by that name. *"Taghūt"* (translated above as Devil *"Shaytān"*) they mention, is every type of falsehood. Others say that "jibt" are magicians and "taghūt" are the Devils *(Shayātīn)*. Besides these there are other opinions as well.

The Jews by their activities seem to believe in these things instead of Allāh. This was due only to their obstinacy and foolishness. Today this type of behaviour is also evident in many groups calling themselves Muslims as well.

"These are the ones whom Allāh has cursed." i.e. They have been cast far from Allāh's mercy. Because of this, they remain floundering in falsehood, making claims that the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* are better than the Muslims.

"You shall never find a helper for those whom Allāh has cursed." None shall assist them in the world, nor in the Hereafter when the chastisement of Allāh overtakes them. The Ahādīth also cite certain sins whereby a person, though not a disbeliever *(kāfir)*, will be cursed if he perpetrates them. The following are the sins.

THE TEN PEOPLE CURSED WITH REGARD TO LIQUOR

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the following persons with regard to liquor:

1. *The brewer.*
2. *The one who has it brewed.*
3. *The consumer.*
4. *The transporter.*
5. *The one to whom it is being transported*
6. *The one who serves it:*
7. *The seller.*
8. *The one who uses the money derived therefrom.*
9. *The one who buys it.*

10. The one for whom it is bought. [Mishkāt p.242]

THE ONE WHO HARMS THE MUSLIMS OR PLOTS AGAINST THEM

Sayyidina Abu Bakr Siddique رضی الله عنه reports that Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "That person is accursed who harms a Muslim or plots against him." [*Mishkāt p. 428*]

THOSE WHO REFUTE TAQDĪR *(FATE)* AND ADD TO ALLĀH'S BOOK

Sayyida Ayshah رضی الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم did say, "I have cursed six persons, and the prayer *(du'ā)* of all the Prophet are accepted. (They are:)

1. *The one who adds to the book of Allāh.*
2. *The one who refutes predestination.*
3. *The one who makes Lawful (Halāl) those things that Allāh has declared Unlawful (Harām).*
4. *The one who vilifies my family.*
5. *The one who neglects my Sunnah. [Majma'uz Zawa'id v.7 p.205]*

Although the hadith initially mentioned six persons, only five have been listed. It is possible that one of the scribes omitted the sixth. This hadith is also recorded in Mishkāt (*p.22*) where the sixth person is the one who assumes authority by force so that he may honour those whom Allāh had disgraced and he disgraces those whom Allāh has honoured.

The fifth person cited refers to the one who completely turns away from the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, and also the one who mocks at it. [*Mirqāt*]

THOSE WHO BURN LANTERNS AT THE GRAVES

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم cursed those women who visit graves, those who prostrate to the graves and those who light lanterns at the graves. [*Abu Dawūd and Tirmidhi*]

THOSE WHO WAIL AND THOSE WHO LISTEN TO WAILING

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم cursed the women who wail as well as those who listen to them. [*Mishkāt p. 151*]

THE DISOBEDIENT WIFE

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "When a woman refuses to come to the bed of her husband when he calls, and he spends the night angry with her, then she will be under the curse of the angels till the morning." [*Mishkāt p. 280*]

THOSE WHO SPEAK ILL OF THE SAHĀBA رضى الله عنهم

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you see those who speak ill of my Companion (*Sahāba*), tell them, 'May Allāh's curse befall you because of your evil!" [*Mishkāt p. 554*]

THE RECEIVER OF USURY, THE SCRIBE AND THE WITNESS

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the one who takes usury, the one who pays it, the one who records the transaction and those who are witness to it. He mentioned that they all share equally in the sin. [*Mishkāt p. 244*]

Another narration states that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the giver of interest, the receiver, the tattooist, the one on whom the tattoo is drawn and those who make pictures. [*Mishkāt*]

THE GIVER AND RECEIVER OF A BRIBE

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed those who gave bribes and those who accepted them. [*Mishkāt p. 226*]

According to a narration of Sayyidina Thauban رضى الله عنه, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the giver of a bribe, the receiver, as well the one who is the intermediary between the two. [*Mishkāt*]

THOSE WHO STOCKPILE GRAINS AT THE TIME OF NECESSITY

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه reports that صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person will be sustained by Allāh who goes out of town to acquire grain for people (by virtue of which the people receive their staple diet). That person is accursed who stockpiles grain (at the time of necessity awaiting an increase in price so that he can earn a higher profit)." [*Mishkāt p. 251*]

THOSE WHO MAKE A LIVING CREATURE THEIR TARGET

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed those who make a living creature their target (in shooting practice) [*Mishkāt p. 357*]. It is also forbidden to use live bait when fishing.

THOSE WHO IMITATE THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE OPPOSITE GENDER

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh curses those women who imitate men and those men who imitate women. [*Mishkāt p. 380*]

According to another narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās. رضى الله عنه, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed effeminate men and those women who imitated men, instructing that people do not allow them in their homes. [*Ibid*]

These Ahādīth report curses upon those people who attempt to alter their natural appearance so as to emulate another sex. However, those people who are

born as hermaphrodites are not cursed because they have no choice in the matter.

All people are accursed who have sex change operations, or imitate the opposite sex in their dressing e.g. men who grow ponytails or who wear feminine clothes. It is a serious sin to allow such people into one's home.

THOSE WHO IMITATE THE DRESS OF THE OPPOSITE GENDER

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed those men who dress like women and those women who dress like men. [*Mishkāt p. 383*]

THOSE WHO PERPETRATE SODOMY

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That person is accursed who gratifies himself through the back passage of his wife." [*Mishkāt p. 276*]

It is reported in the "Musnad of Ahmad" (*v.1 p.309*) that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thrice repeated Allāh' s curse upon those people who indulge in the act of the nation of Lūt عليه السلام (*sodomy*).

In *(v.1 p.317)* of the same book, that person is also cursed who gratifies his sexual lust with an animal.

THOSE WHO TRANSPLANT HUMAN HAIR AND WHO DRAW TATTOOS

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم undoubtedly cursed the woman who transplants hair onto another, as well as that woman who has hair transplanted onto herself. He also cursed the person who draws tattoos and the one on whom a tattoo is drawn. [*Targhīb v.2 p. 120*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the tattooist, the one on whom a tattoo is made, those who pluck their eyebrows and those women who have their teeth filed thin (creating gaps between) to beautify themselves; since all of these seek to alter Allāh's creation. [*Targhīb v.3 p.120*]

NOT DISCLOSING DEFECTIVE GOODS

Sayyidina Wāthila رضى الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "Allāh and His angels will continue cursing the person who sells a defective item without disclosing the defect to the buyer." [*Mishkāt p. 249*]

THOSE WHO SLAUGHTER IN THE NAME OF ANOTHER BESIDES ALLĀH, AND THOSE WHO STEAL PROPERTY

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's curse be on those who slaughter in the name of another beside Allāh. Allāh's curse be on those who steal the markings that designate property boundaries. Allāh's curse be on those who curse their fathers. Allāh's curse be on those who grant refuge to people who create innovations (in Islām, be it a belief or

practice)." [*Muslim v.2 p.160*]

One of the people cursed in the above hadith is he who destroys, steals or alters those markings that separate peoples' properties. By doing this, they include the property of others into their own, thereby acquiring larger tracts of land. It is totally Unlawful *(Harām)* to usurp the land of others by this, or any other means e.g. altering plans, etc.

LOOKING AT A PERSON WHO IS NOT A MAHRAM

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه reports that the hadith reached his ears in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's curse be on the person who looks and the one who is looked at." [*Mishkāt p. 270*]

This hadith includes numerous rulings. It expounds the general rule that every evil gaze is Unlawful *(Harām)*. Not only is the person casting the gaze sinful, but every person (male or female) is sinful who intentionally places himself/herself upon such a pedestal where others cast evil glances at them. Therefore, those who expose any part of their body (that ought to be concealed) to another will fall under the curse of Allāh.

CHANGING ONE'S PARENTAGE

Sayyidina Amr bin Khārija رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The curse of Allāh, His angels and mankind are on the person who calls another person his father (besides his real father) and the slave who calls another person his master (besides his real master). Allāh will not accept any obligation *(Fardh)* or optional *(Nafl)* actions from them." [*Ahmad v.4 p.187*]

This hadith serves as a warning to those who wish to alter their lineage by claiming to belong to a family of a higher social standing. This hadith also refers to those slaves who, after having being set free, attribute their emancipation to another person.

THE "MUHALLIL" AND "MUHALLAL LAHU"

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the "Muhallil" and the person for whom the woman was made Lawful *(Halāl)*. [*Mishkāt p. 284*]

The Shari'ah dislikes divorce. However, if divorce has to be pronounced, it should be by means of a single revocable divorce. If a person pronounced three divorces (be they separate or all at once) he will only be allowed to remarry his wife after she passes her Iddah, consummates a marriage to another man, and then passes a second Iddah.

It often occurs that people are especially appointed to marry women whose husbands have issued three divorces. They marry these women with the explicit instruction to divorce them once the marriage has been consummated so that she may be remarried to her former husband. The man who marries the divorced woman (so that she may be later remarried to her former husband) is called the "Muhallil". The former husband is called the "Muhallal Lahu" (for whom the action is being done).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed both these people because the intention behind the Muhallil's marriage is eventual separation which is contrary to the Shar'ī reason for marriage.

MISLEADING A BLIND PERSON AND CAUSING DIFFICULTY TO PARENTS

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's curse be upon the person who alters boundary markers. Allāh's curse be upon the person who misleads a blind man. Allāh's curse be upon the person who causes difficulty to his parents." [*Ahmad v.1 p.3 17*]

THE SLAVES OF MONEY

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cursed the slave of the Dinār (*gold coin*) and the slave of the Dirham (*silver coin*). [*Mishkāt p. 441*]

This hadith depicts a worldly person. Everyone needs to earn a living to buy the things of the world and are constrained to do so. There is no harm if a person earns Lawful *(Halāl)* sustenance. In fact, this action holds great rewards. The person who becomes enslaved to his wealth and ignores what is Halāl falls under the curse of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Such people do not care where their earnings come from, are heedless of their parents, children, and the injunctions of Allāh. Their only concern is the acquisition of worldly assets.

According to another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "May the slaves of the Dinār, slaves of the Dirham, and slaves of cloth be destroyed. If they are given some of it, they are pleased and if it is withheld from them, they become displeased. May such a person be destroyed and may he fall headlong. If he is pricked by a thorn, may Allāh make it that it is never removed." [*Mishkāt p.439*]

The above are but a few Ahādīth concerning people who have incurred the curses of Allāh and His noble Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. There are many others to be found in the books of Ahādīth.

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُلْكِ فَإِذًا لَّا يُؤْتُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ نَقِيرًا ﴿53﴾ أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ ءَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿54﴾ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ ءَامَنَ بِهِۦ وَمِنْهُم مَّن صَدَّ عَنْهُ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ﴿55﴾

(53) Or do they have a share in the Sovereignty? In that case they would not even give people an iota thereof. (54) Or are they jealous of mankind because of what Allāh has given them of His bounty? Indeed We conferred on the family of Ibrahīm the Book and wisdom and We had given them a mighty kingdom. (55) Of them were those who believed therein and those who turned away there from. Hell (Jahanman) is sufficient as a smouldering inferno.

THE JEWS ARE CONSUMED WITH HATRED AND JEALOUSY

It is narrated in "Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p. 71*) that the People of the Book said, "Muhammad says that whatever he has been given is due to humility. However, his only objective in marrying nine wives is marriage itself and he only wants that none should be a greater king than he!" It was on this occasion that the above verses were revealed.

The Jews were never prepared to accept the truth and always sought to raise objections against Islām. When they found nothing to object to, they criticised the numerous marriages of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. A prophet of Allāh cannot contravene Allāh's commandments nor can he mislead others. It is therefore obvious that any objections raised against a prophet of Allāh is, in fact, an objection raised against Allāh Himself. (If a prophet is considered to be sinful then, Allāh forbid, it would mean that Allāh chose a sinner to guide others.)

Allāh says in these verses that these Jews possess nothing of substance. Even if they had anything, they would not even part with a "Naqīr" (the slit on a date stone). They give nothing and are jealous of what others have. Neither do jealous people achieve anything by their behaviour nor does the person they are jealous of lose what he has. The worst consequence of jealousy is that it shows that a person is unhappy with the decree of Allāh.

"Indeed We conferred on the family of Ibrahīm the Book and wisdom and We had given them a mighty kingdom." Allāh makes mention of the family of Ibrahīm because the Jews were well acquainted with him. "The family of Ibrahīm" refers to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. Allāh had conferred on him the Zabūr and granted him and his son Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام *"a mighty kingdom"*.

It is reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.442*) that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had 1300 wives and Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام had 100. Just as they were from the family of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, so too was Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, it would be incorrect to object to his marriages.

Allāh says in Surah Ra'd, *"Verily, We have sent many messengers before you and We granted them wives and progenies"* [*Surah 14, verse 38*]. Allāh confers His bounties upon whom He pleases and none has the authority to object. Similarly Allāh reserves the right to legalise something for whom He pleases. To express displeasure at the decree of Allāh is tantamount to disbelief (*kufr*). According to the Qur'ān, Allāh restricted the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمto nine and that of his Ummah to four.

"Of them were those who believed therein and those who turned away there from." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that this verse offers solace to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It informs him that just as people in former times rejected the teachings of their prophets, there will be those who will reject his teachings as well. He should not grow despondent over their disbelief. Soon they will meet their inevitable doom, as Allāh concludes by saying, *"Hell is sufficient as a smouldering inferno."*

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم بَدَّلْنَـٰهُمْ جُلُودًا

غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا
أَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

(56) Indeed those who disbelieve in our revelation We shall soon enter them into a ferocious fire. Whenever their skins melt away, We shall exchange them for fresh skins so that they may taste the torment. Undoubtedly Allāh is Mighty, The Wise. (57) As for those who believe and do righteous deeds We shall enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow to dwell therein forever and ever. Therein they shall have pure spouses, and We shall enter them into abundant shade.

THE INMATES OF HELL SHALL HAVE THEIR SKINS FREQUENTLY CHANGED WHILE THE INHABITANTS OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* SHALL REJOICE

The above verses describe the plight of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* as well as the good fortune of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. The fire of Hell shall be severe indeed, as Allāh says in Surah Ā'la, *"He shall enter a grand fire."* [*Surah 87, verse 12*]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The fire you see in this world is merely a 70th part of the fire of Hell."* Someone remarked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the fire of this world is more than sufficient." the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The fire of Hell *(Jahannam)* has been intensified a further 69 times, each being as intense as the fire of the world." [*Bukhari v.1 p.462*]

This verse gives some detail of the torment which people suffer in Hell. Every time their skins are scorched by the flames, they will be given new skins so that the suffering is renewed. This punishment will go on for eternity, as Allāh says in Surah Ā'la (*Surah 87, verse 13*), *"He shall not die therein, neither shall he live."* (i.e. The existence of people in Hell cannot be called a life.)

"Undoubtedly Allāh is Mighty, The Wise." None shall be able to avail another from Allāh's chastisement. Every punishment will be according to His infinite wisdom.

After discussing the plight of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, Allāh speaks of those who will enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. "As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, We shall enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow to dwell therein forever and ever. Therein they shall have pure spouses..." Their spouses shall be free of impurity, disease and evil dispositions. There will be no cause for repulsion.

"..... and We shall enter them into abundant shade." This means that the gardens will be flourishing, thus providing abundant shade. It often occurs in this world that some sunlight penetrates even the densest foliage. In Heaven *(Jannah)*, however, this will not be the case.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا۟ ٱلْأَمَٰنَٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا۟ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿58﴾

(58) Verily Allāh instructs you to restore trusts to their rightful owners and that you judge between people with justice. Indeed Allāh offers you the best of advice. Surely Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing.

RESTORATION OF TRUST AND JUSTICE

Commentators have reported that when Makkah was conquered, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took the keys of the Ka'ba from Sayyidina Uthmān bin Talha Hajabi. (The keys to the Ka'ba remained with his family for many generations. The task of opening and locking the Ka'ba is termed "Sadānatul Bayt".)

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed Salāh in the Ka'ba. When he emerged from the Ka'ba, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه requested that the keys be given to him so that the Banu Hashim may have the honour of being entrusted with "Siqāyatul Hāj" (providing water for the pilgrims) as well as "Sadānatul Bait". According to other narrations, Sayyidina Abbās bin Abdul Mutallib رضى الله عنه made this request. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not give the key to either of them.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emerged from the Ka'ba he recited the verse, *"Verily Allāh instructs you to restore trusts to their rightful owners."* According to the instruction of Allāh the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم handed the keys back to Sayyidina Uthmān bin Abi Talha رضى الله عنه saying, "O Banu Talha take the keys as a trust from Allāh and none except an oppressor shall take it from you.

According to another narration, Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "O Banu Talha, keep the keys forever as a legacy." The keys to the Ka'ba remain with this family to this day and the custodian is referred to by the people of Makkah as "Shaybi".

The above incident is reported in "Durrul Manthūr" (*v.2 p.174*), "Ibn Kathīr" (*v.1 p.515*) and "Asbābun Nuzūl" (*p. 15 1*).

Restoration of trusts has been instructed in numerous verses of the Qur'ān that warn against misappropriation. In Surah Anfāl, Allāh says, *"O you who believe, do not betray Allāh and the messenger and do not knowingly betray your mutual trusts."* [*Surah 8, verse 27*]

Allāh says in Surah Yusuf, *"Most certainly Allāh does not guide the plans of the betrayers."* [*Surah 12, verse 52*]

Allāh declares in Surah Anfāl, *"Verily Allāh does not like the bet rayers."* [*Surah 12, verse 58*]

He says in Surah Hajj, *"indeed Allāh dislikes every ungrateful betrayer."* [*Surah 22, verse 38*]

Describing the good Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says in Surah Ma'ārij, *'And*

those who give due regard to trusts and their pledges." [*Surah 70, verse 32*]

AN EXPLANATION OF TRUSTS

All the above verses mention trusts in the broad sense. These refer to all types of trusts including those that a person owes to Allāh in terms of Salāh, Zakāh, fasting, oaths, etc. Whether a person fulfills these or neglects them, none is really aware of his action. Then there also the rights that man owes to his fellow humans. These are referred to as "Huqūqul Ibād" and it is obligatory that they also be fulfilled. These include properties placed in one's trust, the debts owed to others and all those things that a person may have acquired from another in an illegal manner. Whether the other person is aware of the rights owed to him or not, it is of paramount importance that these be fulfilled.

Those people who have attained high-ranking positions in government and other official posts need also regard their positions as trusts. They should never betray the public in these tasks. In a similar manner, other people are also vested with certain trusts that they have to fulfill e.g. the husband, wife, business partners, travelling companions, parents, children, etc. They are all required to fulfill their obligations to whom they are due. If they are found lacking in this, they will have to answer to Allāh on the Day of judgment *(Qiyamah).*

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"If any of you place a trust with another, then the one in whom the trust is placed should fulfill the trust and fear Allāh his Lord."* [*Surah 2, verse 283*]

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS A REQUISITE OF BELIEF *(IMĀN)*

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم often told them that the person who is not trustworthy has no Imān and the one who does not fulfill a promise has no Dīn *(religion).* [*Mishkāt p. 15*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said that the hypocrite has three characteristics even though he performs Salāh, fasts and he considers himself to be a Muslim. These are:

1. *When he speaks he lies.*
2. *When he makes a promise, he does not fulfill it.*
3. *When he is entrusted with something, he misappropriates it. [Muslim v.1 p.56]*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person in whom four traits are found is a pure hypocrite. If one of these traits are found in a person, then he is guilty of a trait of hypocrisy as long as he does not rid himself of it. (These are) (1) He misappropriates trusts, (2) he lies, (3) he breaks his promises and (4) he swears when involved in a dispute." [*Bukhari v.1 p.10*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "When you are blessed with four qualities it matters not if you have nothing of this world (viz.) (1) Safeguarding trusts, (2) trustworthiness, (3) good character and (4) pure sustenance." [*Ahmad and Bayhaqi*]

It is reported in the Mu'atta of Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه that a person asked Sayyidina Luqmān, the wise, how he reached the mantle of knowledge and virtue. He replied, "Truthfulness, fulfillment of trusts and abstinence from vain talks. These three things have placed me on this pedestal." [*Mishkāt p. 445*]

TRUST WORTHINESS IN HANDLING THE FUNDS OF INSTITUTIONS

Many people are entrusted with public funds. These include kings, rulers, guardians of minor children, trustees of Mosque *(Masjid)*s, principals of schools, ministers of finance, those who find lost property and many others holding official posts. All of these people are charged with the protection of these funds and should not misappropriate them. In this world, they accept these funds with open arms but will soon have to face the grievous consequences of the Hereafter should they breach this trust.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه once requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to appoint him to an official post. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم placed his hand on him and said, "O Abu Dharr you are weak. Indeed this is a great trust and responsibility. Without doubt, on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)* it will be a cause of disgrace and remorse except for that person who accepted it truthfully and fulfillled its responsibilities."

According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "O Abu Dharr! I think you are unsuitable for the task. I prefer for you what I prefer for myself, so never assume leadership of even two persons and do not be custodian to the wealth of orphans." [*Muslim*]

IT IS A BREACH OF TRUST TO APPOINT AN INCOMPETENT PERSON TO A POST

In today's times, many people are appointed to posts for which they are not suited. Since these posts are trusts, it will be criminal to confer these to sinners, irreligious and tyrannical people. Those who are given these posts should first be assessed whether they are aware of the Shari'ah or not. It is unfortunate that Muslim leaders do not give this matter priority when granting portfolios. Instead they assign these positions to those who are either their relatives or people who are members of their party.

By acting in this way, the welfare of the public is not given consideration. They choose candidates by virtue of their inclinations and the masses have to bear the brunt of their foolish decisions.

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's curse shall be on the person who is entrusted with the affairs of the Muslims and then appoints someone to a post on the grounds of relationship. No obligatory *(Fardh)*, nor optional *(Nafl)* action of his will be accepted until Allāh enters him into the fire of Hell." [*Targhīb p. 179*]

Politicians make many promises to the public but when they are elected, they not only forget these promises, but oppress the people. They overlook the guidance of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضی الله عنه narrates that Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Allāh forbids Heaven *(Jannah)* to the person who, after having being appointed to a position of authority over the Muslims, dies after having breached their trust."

According to another narration, Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person who, after having being appointed to a position over a people, did not see to their welfare, will never smell the fragrance of Heaven *(Jannah)*." [*Bukhari v.2 p.105819*]

Sayyidina Sa'īd رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Every deceiver shall have a flag in his rear on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)* in proportion to his deception. Behold! There is none more deceptive than the leader of the masses (who deceives his subjects)."

TO ACCEPT A FULL SALARY FOR WORK NOT COMPLETED CONSTITUTES A BREACH OF TRUST

Those people will be considered to have breached a trust who accept their full salaries when their work was left incomplete or they did not complete their working hours. In the same way, the person who accepts bribes and, instead of doing what he was supposed to have done, rather does the work of the person who gives the bribe, then he is also considered to be breaching a trust. The bribe is Unlawful *(Harām)* and so is a part of his salary, since he is not fulfilling the task he is being paid to carry out.

In reality, the quality of trustworthiness is one of extreme importance and forms an integral part of Belief *(Imān)*. It does not only pertain to money matters, but to all other aspects of life as well.

GATHERINGS ARE ALSO A TRUST.

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم mentioned that gatherings are also trusts [*Abu Dawūd*]. This means that whatever is discussed at a gathering should not be passed onto those outside. Doing so constitutes a breach of trust and is contrary to the demands of trustworthiness.

Matters discussed at a meeting may be passed on to others only if it consisted of such talks whereby another person may be harmed e.g. if a murder or a robbery was plotted. Such exceptions have been mentioned in the Ahādīth.

Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم is reported to have said, "When a person looks around after saying something (to ensure that no one else heard), then it should be understood that his speech is a trust" [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]. Therefore, the person being addressed should not tell others what was said.

GIVING ADVICE IS A TRUST

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person from whom advice is sought is trusted." Such a person should therefore advise what he himself would desire in that particular situation.

In another narration of Sayyidina Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه, Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The person who advises another knowing that the advice is not the

best, then he has breached a trust of the person asking for the advice." [*Abu Dawūd*]

TO LOOK INTO ANOTHER PERSON'S HOUSE WITHOUT HIS PERMISSION IS A BREACH OF TRUST

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the following three things are not permissible for anyone.

1. *For a leader of a congregation to pray only for himself without considering them. Doing so is a breach of trust.*
2. *To look, into someone's house without their permission. This is breaching the trust of the people of the house.*
3. *To suppress the need to relieve oneself while performing Salāh. A person should first relieve himself and then perform salāh. [Mishkāt p. 92]*

THE INSTRUCTION TO BE JUST

"..... and that you judge between people with justice." Islām has laid great emphasis on the aspect of justice and those who uphold it have been given the glad tidings of elevated ranks. The contrary has been mentioned with regard to those who practise injustice. Justice entails passing Judgment in accordance with the injunctions taught by Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

PASSING JUDGMENT CONTRARY TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE QUR'ĀN AND HADITH

The legislation passed by man is usually contradictory to the teachings of Allāh and this is injustice even though people may consider it to be just. All laws should be in accordance to that which Allāh prescribes, whether it be with regard to capital punishment, commerce, marriage, divorce, politics, domestic life and every other sphere of life.

Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"The one who does not judge by that which Allāh revealed, then those are the unjust ones indeed"* [*Surah 5, verse 45*] It is unfortunate that even the people in the Muslim states are not prepared to accept Islāmic legislation.

Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"Do they seek the law of ignorance?* Who is better than Allāh to decide for the people with conviction?" [*Surah 5, verse 50*]

INJUSTICE DRAWS CALAMITIES

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "What will be your condition when five things enter you? I seek refuge with Allāh that these five things should ever enter you." He then proceeded to enumerate:

1. *When fornication becomes widespread in a nation, plagues will overcome them and such diseases will spread, the like thereof their forefathers have will have never experienced before.*

2. *Those who refuse to pay zakāh will be deprived of rain. If it were not for the animals, Allāh would not send clown a single drop.*

3. *Those who decrease in weight and measure will be afflicted with droughts, suffer hard labour and the oppression of tyrants.*

4. *The nation whose leaders pass Judgment contrary to what Allāh has revealed, then Allāh will allow an enemy to overpower them. Then this enemy will take control of that which they controlled.*

5. *Allāh will cause those people to fight who discard Allāh's book, and the Sunnah of His Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم. *[Targhīb v.3 p. 140]*

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه is reported to have said that when a nation begins to breach trusts, then Allāh casts terror into their hearts. When they begin to cheat in weight and measure, their sustenance is curtailed. Bloodshed will be rife among those who judge unjustly, and the enemy will gain the upper hand on those who break their pledges. [*Mu'atta of Scholar (Imām) Maalik* رحمة الله عليه]

Justice Cannot Be Practiced Without piety *(Taqwa).*

Justice can be had only when people fear Allāh, desire to follow the truth, have knowledge of the Qur'ān and Ahādīth and see all as equal before them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Judge between people as you would judge between yourselves." [*Mishkāt p. 322*] This means that just as one desires to be judged with justice, so too should one judge between others.

Nowadays Judgment is passed in favour of those whom one has an association with. There awaits a terrible punishment in the Hereafter for those who pass unjust judgments and assist the oppressors. By acting in this manner, those people who have rightful claims are deprived of their rights and only those people benefit who are able to offer the largest bribes. These things seem rosy in this world and people are unmindful of the terrible consequences these actions will bring in the Hereafter.

GLAD TIDINGS FOR THE JUST ONES AND DESTRUCTION FOR THE UNJUST

Sayyidina Barīra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Judges are of three types. One will go to Heaven *(Jannah)* and the other two will go to Hell. The one to enter Heaven *(Jannah)* is he who recognised the truth and passed Judgment accordingly. The one who recognises the truth and was the unjust, he will enter Hell. The other passes Judgment in ignorance (not being able to discern the truth from falsehood), he will also enter into Hell." [*Targhīb v.3 p.156*]

Of those who will be in the shade of Allāh's throne on the day when there shall be no shade except His, the first mentioned is the just ruler. [*Bukhari v.1 p.191*]

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also mentioned that the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* are

of three categories viz.

1. *Those leaders who are just and have been inspired to do good.*
2. *Those who are soft hearted and merciful to all Muslims.*
3. *Those who, despite having families and children, abstain from asking from others. [Targhīb v.3 p.167]*

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The just ruler will the most beloved and closest to Allāh on the day of judgment *(Qiyamah)*. The most abhorred and distant from Allāh on that day will be the oppressive ruler." [*Ibid*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "The person who is appointed to judge between people has been slaughtered without a knife." [*Mishkāt p. 324*]

The responsibility is indeed weighty and those appointed are generally negligent of their obligation. The consequences of being unjust are great and the punishment should be understood as if one is being slaughtered without a knife (i.e. with a blunt object). The pain is nothing less than excruciating.

WORD OF ADVICE TO RULERS

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The ruler who passed judgement between people will be summoned on the day of judgment *(Qiyamah)* and placed at the edge of Hell. If the order is given that he be pushed, he will be flung down and will continue to fall to its depths for 70 years." [*Targhīb v.3 p.173*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the day of judgment *(Qiyamah)* the hour will dawn upon even the just judge when, because of the intense reckoning, he will wish that he had never even passed Judgment to settle a case concerning even a single date." [*Targhīb v.3 p.157*]

WHO SHOULD BE APPOINTED AS JUDGE?

The question may arise that if the warnings for being a judge are so severe, who will assume the responsibility? The answer is that he should be a person who is learned in the Qur'ān, Sunnah and the principles of Shari'ah, passing Judgment in accordance to these. He must also practise the Shari'ah and encourage others to do the same. Such a person will, Insha Allāh, be successful.

How is he to be found? He should be the person who does not desire the responsibility, nor does he apply for it. He should not desire the intercession of others, nor offer bribes to acquire this post. This is the type of person worthy of the post.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who desires the post of a judge and requests others to intercede on his behalf (so that he may attain the post), will be left to himself (he will not be assisted by Allāh and any decision he makes will be at his own peril). However, the person who is forced to accept the post of a judge, Allāh will dispatch an angel to guide him in his tasks." [*Targhīb v.3 p.162*]

This hadith prohibits the appointment of that person who is desirous of the post. His desire indicates that his only concern is the wealth and fame that go with the office and when he passes Judgment, it will be to fulfill his own ends. On the other hand, the person who is apprehensive of the task at hand will be just as cautious when he is appointed to the office.

If this golden principle is applied, it will eradicate many of the injustices perpetrated in our times. Nowadays many people study for the positions of magistrates with the notion in mind that once they acquire their degrees, they will soon have to secure recommendations and perhaps even bribe some people to attain their offices. The entire system of appointment is based upon this cycle, so that all involved adhere to it. No consideration is given to whether the person has any knowledge of the Qur'ān or the hadith, nor whether he possesses any taqwa or not.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* have instituted the unjust system whereby an oppressed person can never have a hearing until he is able to afford the exorbitant legal costs. Thereafter an appeal has to be made, where after the case will be heard only after the person passes through a lengthy process of delayed and postponed dates of hearing. It is indeed unfortunate that everyone has grown accustomed to this unjust system and are being paid to uphold it.

THERE IS ONLY GOOD IN ACCEPTING THE ADVICE OF ALLĀH

"Indeed Allāh offers you the best advice. Surely Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing." The injunctions of Allāh are replete with good. A person can only benefit by practising on them and these will assure him comfort in both the worlds. On the other hand, the person who does not abide by these will meet his inevitable doom because nothing goes unnoticed by Allāh, Who sees and hears everything. These verses contain stern warnings against all those who pass Judgment unjustly and those who allow the reigns of Judgment to fall into the hands of incompetent, oppressive consumers of bribes.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي ٱلۡأَمۡرِ مِنكُمۡۖ فَإِن تَنَٰزَعۡتُمۡ فِي شَيۡءٖ
فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمۡ تُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞ وَأَحۡسَنُ
تَأۡوِيلًا ﴿59﴾

(59) O you who believe, obey Allāh, obey the messenger and those in authority from among you. If you fall into dispute regarding a matter, then refer it to Allāh and the messenger if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day. This is best and more seemly in the end.

THE INSTRUCTION TO OBEY ALLĀH, HIS MESSENGER صلى الله عليه وسلم AND THOSE IN AUTHORITY, AND THE INJUNCTION TO DECIDE DISPUTES BY THE QUR'ĀN AND THE SUNNAH

It is reported in "Asbābun Nuzūl" *(p.152)* and "Rūhul Ma'āni" *(v.5 p.65)* that

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once dispatched Sayyidina Khalid bin Walid رضى الله عنه as the leader of an expedition. Without the consent of Sayyidina Khalid رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Amār bin Yāsir رضى الله عنه took one of the enemy under his protection. On learning about this, Sayyidina Khalid رضى الله عنه became upset as he was not consulted in this matter. When it was reported to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he consented to the action of Sayyidina Amār رضى الله عنه but warned him never to act without the permission of the leader. The two companions were thus reconciled.

Although the above incident was the specific reason for the revelation of this verse, the context is general and applies to all Muslims. All Muslims are instructed to obey the orders of those who are appointed above them. Thereafter Allāh advises that all contentious issues be resolved by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم This matter is discussed many times in the Qur'ān. Allāh, as the Lord of the universe had sent His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān as a guide to mankind. Every person should abide by these two codes of law.

Together with obedience to Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh specifically instructs the Muslims to obey their leaders irrespective of the titles they hold. By conforming to this, the Ummah will remain united, thereby remaining a force to be reckoned with. By disobeying their leaders, the Muslims will fall into wrangling and disputes. Obedience to one's leaders constitutes obedience to Allāh and a person will be greatly rewarded for it.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allāh and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allāh. Whoever obeys his leader has obeyed me and whoever disobeys his leader has disobeyed me." [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.1 p.444*]

THERE IS NO NEED TO OBEY THAT ORDER WHICH CONSTITUTES DISOBEDIENCE TO ALLĀH

Sayyidah Ummul Hasīn رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Obey and listen to the leader who instructs you according to the Book of Allāh even though his nose and ears may be cut off." [*Muslim v.2 p. 125*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A Muslim is obliged to obey whether he likes it or not, as long as the instruction is not sinful. When he is instructed to commit a sin, there is no need for obedience." [*Bukhari v.2 p.1057*]

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "There is no obedience for sin. Obedience is reserved for good deeds." [*Mishkāt p.319*]

Nowadays people in authority are under the misconception that their orders should be complied with, irrespective of whether they are in accordance with the Shari'ah or not. They are not only disobeying Allāh but are making others do the same. When they wish to enforce any unjust law or make themselves heard, they quote the above verse in their support. In this way, they attempt to win the favour of the masses but, at the same time, they forget the clear instruction of the

Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that obedience is not for sinful actions.

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه is reported to have said that it is incumbent upon the leader of the Muslims to rule according to Allāh's injunctions and to fulfill His trust. As long as he does this, it is binding upon the masses to obey him. *["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.1 p.444]*

WHO ARE "THOSE IN AUTHORITY"?

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه mentioned that, *"those in authority"* refers to the jurists and Scholars *(Ulama)*, i.e. those people who teach the laws of Dīn *(religion)*. Sayyidina Hasan رحمه الله عليه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمه الله عليه are also of this opinion.

Sayyidina Ikramah رحمه الله عليه maintains that it refers to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. Sayyidina Atā رحمه الله عليه says that it refers to the emigrants *(Muhājirīn)*, the Ansār and those who follow them. [*Baghawi v.1 p.444/5*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمه الله عليه writes in his Tafsīr (*v.1 p.5 18*), "It is apparent (Allāh knows best) that the verse is general and applies to every person in authority, be they leaders or Scholars *(Ulama)*." The reason for this is that the affairs of Dīn *(religion)* rest with the Scholars *(Ulama)* while the affairs of the government rest with the leaders. By obeying both these groups all branches of life will be safeguarded and unity will be fostered.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN THE EVENT OF A DISPUTE?

"If you fall into dispute regarding a matter, then refer it to Allāh and the messenger if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day." This verse outlines a golden principle to resolve disputes. The person who believes in Allāh and the reckoning of the Last Day always looks to the injunctions of Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for guidance. When involved in a dispute, each party should seek guidance from the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth and should sacrifice their personal opinions for the decision of Allāh and His the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is the way in which a Muslim resolves disputes.

THE INCORRECT ATTITUDE OF MUSLIM GOVERNMENTS

The leaders of Muslim countries, while claiming to follow Islām, allow their legislative assemblies to make laws. Instead of following the guidelines of the Qur'ān and Ahādīth, they choose to ape the ways of the west. With slight amendments, they pass the same laws enforced by European countries, turning a blind eye to the Islāmic laws of capital punishment.

When Muslims assume leadership of any country, they claim to introduce socialist or democratic rule to appease their western mentors. Others foolishly adopt secular rules and are embarrassed to introduce an Islāmic government.

This sad state of affairs has crept into every echelon of society. None are prepared to adhere to the Qur'ān, considering the injunctions of Allāh too difficult. It is unfortunate that people prefer to follow the decisions of their leaders and customs instead of the Qur'ān and hadith.

THE LINE BETWEEN SUNNAH AND BID'AH *(INNOVATIONS)*

There are many practices that certain groups term Bid'ah *(innovations)*, while others considers them to be part of Dīn *(religion)*. To decide the matter, one should refer to the Qur'ān and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"This is best and more seemly in the end." This verse warns against following one's personal opinion. A person should never consider his opinion to be the best because the injunctions of Allāh are best. The end result of adherence to the Qur'ān and Sunnah will always ensure success in both the worlds.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ
يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَن يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ
أَن يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا (60) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى
الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنكَ صُدُودًا (61) فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم
مُّصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا
وَتَوْفِيقًا (62) أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل لَّهُمْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا (63) وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا
لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا
اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا (64)

(60) Have you seen those who claim to believe in that which was revealed to you and to those before you, yet they seek Judgment from Devil (Shaytān) whereas they have been instructed to reject him? Devil (Shaytān) desires to mislead them far astray. (61) When it is said to them, "Come to that which Allāh has revealed and towards the messenger," you will see the hypocrites turning from you with aversion. (62) What will be the condition when a calamity afflicts them because of what their own hands do? Then they will come to you swearing by Allāh, "We only desired virtue and mutual harmony. (63) These are the ones, the secrets of whose hearts Allāh knows. So bother not with them, advise them and tell them things that may be beneficial to their souls. (64) We have sent every messenger so that he be obeyed by the order of Allāh. When they oppress their souls, they come to you seeking Allāh's forgiveness and the messenger seeks forgiveness on their behalf (When this occurs) They will surely find that Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE INCIDENT OF THE HYPOCRITE WHO SOUGHT JUDGMENT FROM A JEW

It is reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" [*v.1 p.446*] from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى

عنه الله that there a dispute once arose between a Jew and a hypocrite by the name of Bishr. The Jew requested that the matter be resolved by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whereas Bishr wanted it resolved by one of the Jewish leaders called Ka'ab bin Ashraf. When the Jew insisted that the matter be refered to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the hypocrite reluctantly agreed. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed Judgment in favour of the Jew.

When they left the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Bishr told the Jew to accompany him to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. On reaching Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, the Jew narrated the entire incident to him and added that the matter had already been resolved by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه told them to wait for him and entered his house. After a short while he emerged with sword in hand and executed Bishr saying, "This is my decision with regard to those who are unhappy with the Judgment of Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم!" It was on this occasion that the above verses were revealed.

Upon revelation, Jibr'īl عليه السلام commented that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه had drawn a distinction between truth and falsehood. Since then, he was referred to as Farūq (the one who distinguishes between truth and falsehood).

AN ADMONITION TO THOSE WHO LEND SUPPORT FROM UNISLĀMIC LAWS

Other reasons for the revelation of the above verse have also been reported in the books of Tafsīr. Nevertheless, the verse serves as an admonition to all those who are not satisfied with the decision of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah despite claiming to be Muslims. Instead they take their cases to those whom they think will decide the matter by un-Islāmic laws and whom they can bribe to pass Judgment in their favour (like the disbelievers *(kuffār)* judicial courts).

The verse uses the word "taghūt" which generally refers to Devil *(Shaytān)* (and has been translated accordingly). In the context of the above incident, it refers to the Jew, Ka'ab bin Ashraf, who was truly a satanic person. The dictates of Belief *(Imān)* is that the decision of such people never be accepted, as Allāh says, *"whereas they have been instructed to reject him Devil (Shaytān)."*

However, when a person rejects the directives of the Qur'ān and follows the path of those who judge contrary to the dictates of the Shari'ah, then Devil *(Shaytān)* becomes their shepherd. Allāh continues to say, *"Devil (Shaytān) desires to mislead them far astray."*

"When it is said to them, 'Come to that which Allāh has revealed and towards the messenger,' you will see the hypocrites turning from you with aversion." They choose to avoid having their matters settled by the Shari'ah and, like Bishr, they want to resort to Devil *(Shaytān)*.

THE MISINTERPRETATIONS OF THE TRIBE OF THE AFOREMENTIONED HYPOCRITE

It is recorded in "Rūhul Ma'āni" that the heirs of the hypocrite Bishr demanded the life of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه in return. When it was brought to their notice that Bishr was displeased with the decision of the Holy Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم [which constitutes disbelief *(kufr)*], they began making excuses on his behalf. On that occasion the following verses were revealed, *"What will be the condition when a calamity afflicts them because of what their own hands do? Then they will come to you swearing by Allāh, 'We only desired virtue and mutual harmony."*

This verse serves to warn those who make futile excuses, informing them that these excuses will be of no use to them since their hypocrisy had already become apparent.

"These are the ones, the secrets of whose hearts Allāh knows." Allāh will punish them according to what their hearts conceal.

Allāh then advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further, informing him how to deal with such people. *"So bother not with them, advise them and tell them things that may be beneficial to their souls."*

Another interpretation of *"So bother not with them,"* is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should not bother to accept their excuses. He should turn a deaf ear to their requests for the blood of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه because the blood of a Hypocrite *(Munāfiq)* was really worth nothing.

Certain commentators have explained that the closing portion of the verse means that these people should be advised in private since there is a greater possibility of them accepting the advice in this manner. [*Ibn Kathīr v.1 p.519 ,"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.69*]

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم HAD BEEN SENT TO BE OBEYED

To turn the attention of these people towards repentance *(Taubah)*, Allāh advises them saying, *"We have sent every messenger so that he be obeyed by the order of Allāh."* Obedience to the messenger is, in fact, obedience to Allāh and disobedience to the messenger constitutes disobedience to Allāh. Not only did Bishr break the law of Allāh, but his tribesmen did the same by trying to justify his actions. The verse advises that it would have been best for them to seek forgiveness from Allāh and for the Rasūl *(messenger)* of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم to also seek forgiveness on their behalf. Allāh says, *"When they oppress their souls they come to you seeking Allāh's forgiveness and the messenger seeks forgiveness on their behalf (When this occurs) They will surely find that Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Some commentators have mentioned that they were required to seek forgiveness in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because their action was actually an attack on Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This was so because they refused to accept his decision and resorted to defending their tribesman. This abhorrent action hurt the feelings of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The principle of repentance *(Taubah)* is that it be made in private if the sin was committed privately and it be made public if the sin is committed publicly.

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا

فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ حَرَجٗا مِّمَّا قَضَيۡتَ وَيُسَلِّمُواْ تَسۡلِيمٗا ﴿٦٥﴾

(65) Verily, by the oath of your Lord, they will not believe until they make you judge the disputes between them and they do not find any dissatisfaction in that which you decide and they submit with full submission.

ONE CAN NEVER BE A PERFECT BELIEVER *(MU'MIN)* UNTIL ONE SUBMITS TO THE DECISION OF PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

A narration appears in Bukhari [*v.1 p.660*] wherein Sayyidina Urwa bin Zubair رضى الله عنه reports that once Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه had a dispute with one of the Ansār concerning the irrigation of their fields.

When they approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he told Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه to first irrigate his own fields (because the flow of the water stemmed from his land) and then to allow the water to flow to his Ansāri neighbour. The Ansāri remarked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! You have passed Judgment in his favour because he is your cousin". The blessed face of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم changed colour and he became very upset. He said, "O Zubair, irrigate your fields and hold the water back till the fields have been saturated. Then allow the water to flow to your neighbour." Initially the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had passed Judgment in favour of both companions but after the Ansāri's remark, he changed the verdict to accord to Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه his full right.

Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه said that in his opinion the above verse was revealed with reference to this incident. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم decides a matter, Belief *(Imān)* demands that a person be completely satisfied with the decision of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Although the verse may have been revealed with regard to this particular incident, the purport is general and may be applied to every situation. Whenever the decision of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم serves to resolve a dispute, both parties should accept the decision wholeheartedly. It often occurs that people in today's time are reluctant to accept the Islāmic verdict in their disputes. These people should question their Belief *(Imān)* since Allāh declares on oath, *"Verily, by the oath of your Lord, they will not believe until they make you judge the disputes between them and do not find any dissatisfaction to that which you decide and they submit with full submission."*

Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is no longer alive, the Qur'ān and the Sunnah should be consulted in all matters.

THE DESPICABLE SITUATION OF PRESENT DAY MUSLIMS

People have become so accustomed to and enamoured by the unjust legislation of the west that they are prepared to conform to them even if it means that they become oppressors or the oppressed. However, they are not prepared to practise the justice of Islām.

They seem to enjoy the resultant fornication, murder and robbery that stem

from Western legislation but do not care to implement the laws of Islām by which all this would be eradicated. (Allāh forbid!) They say that these laws are barbaric, thereby including themselves in the ranks of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. If rogues and thieves were to have their hands cut off, if adulterers were to be stoned or lashed and highway robbers were to be either crucified or their hands and feet cut (according to the injunctions outlined in Surah Mā'idah), then all these atrocious crimes would be no more.

It is indeed unfortunate that many so-called Muslims are averse to these laws. They should truly evaluate their Belief *(Imān)*, since the verse not only stipulates (as a requisite of Belief *(Imān)*) that disputes be brought before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but adds that these also be accepted wholeheartedly.

وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنِ اقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ أَوِ اخْرُجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِكُم مَّا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا۟ مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِۦ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيتًا ﴿٦٦﴾ وَإِذًا لَّءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مِّن لَّدُنَّآ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَلَهَدَيْنَٰهُمْ صِرَٰطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٦٨﴾

(66) if We should command them to kill themselves or abandon their homes, they will not do so; except a few of them. If they were to do what they were advised to do, it would be best for them and more strengthening for their Belief (Imān). (67) In that event We will surely grant them a magnificent reward from Ourselves. (68) and We will undoubtedly guide them to the straight path.

IF THEY WERE COMMANDED TO KILL THEMSELVES OR FORSAKE THEIR HOMES, ONLY A FEW WOULD COMPLY

In the above verses, Allāh highlights that the quality of a Believer *(Mu'min)* is that he should be able to accept the decisions of Allāh's Rasul *(messenger)* صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is not as difficult as if they were commanded to kill themselves (like the Bani Isrā'īl were commanded to do as repentance *(Taubah)* for their worship of the calf), or commanded to abandon their homes (as the Bani Isrā'īl were told to leave Egypt). Only a limited few will be able to abide by commands as stringent as these.

When this verse was revealed, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if he were commanded to kill himself he would comply. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم confirmed that he was truthful. According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم grabbed hold of his hand and told him, "If this command were to be issued, then he (*Sayyidina Abu Bakr*) would definitely be amongst those "few" to comply, (*as mentioned in the verse*)." A similar hadith has been reported with regard to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه.

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه reports that when this verse was revealed, a few Sahāba رضى الله عنهم said that if this command were to be given to them, they would definitely obey it. When this statement was reported to the Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم he said, "The Belief *(Imān)* entrenched in their hearts is more steady than the mountains."

It has been narrated from Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه that he said, "All praise be to Allāh who has kept us in good stead. If we were commanded to kill ourselves, we would definitely do so." When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم heard of this he said, "Without doubt there are certain individuals in my Ummah whose Belief *(Imān)* is more solid than the mountains." [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.72*]

Certain narrations report that when Sayyidina Zubair رضى الله عنه and the Ansāri were returning from the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they passed by Sayyidina Miqdād رضى الله عنه. He enquired from them in whose favour was Judgment passed. Turning his face, the Ansāri replied, "the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed Judgment in favour of his cousin." A Jew who overheard the conversation commented, "Woe unto those who testify that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the messenger of Allāh yet when he decides a matter, they slander him. By Allāh! We committed one sin in the lifetime of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. He instructed us to make repentance *(Taubah)* and commanded us to kill ourselves. In compliance with the law of Allāh, our people killed themselves to the extent that the dead numbered '10 000. Our Lord was pleased with us on that account.

Although the incident involved only one Ansāri, the Jew hinted at all the Muslims. Upon hearing his taunt, Sayyidina Thābit bin Qais رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Amār bin Yāsir رضى الله عنه said that if they were ordered to kill themselves, they would certainly do so. Although the chain of narrators is not mentioned for the above incident, nonetheless it adequately explains the link between the above verses. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.72*]

The Ansāri mentioned in the incident was a hypocrite and was referred to as an Ansāri only because he belonged to one of the tribes of the Ansār.

Allāh concludes these verses by mentioning certain glad tidings. He says, "*If they were to do what they were advised to do, it would be best for them and more strengthening for their Belief (Imān). In that event, We will surely grant them a magnificent reward from Ourselves and We will undoubtedly guide them to the straight path.*"

وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَٱلصِّدِّيقِينَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَضْلُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

(69) Whoever obey Allāh and His messenger, then they will be with those prophets, "Siddiqīn", martyrs and "Sālihīn" upon whom Allāh has bestowed His bounties. These are indeed the best of companions. (70) Such is the bounty of Allāh and Allāh suffices as the Knower.

THE BEST OF TIDINGS FOR THOSE WHO OBEY ALLĀH AND HIS PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Whereas Allāh instructed in the previous verses that He be obeyed together with his Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم this verse explains the lofty status to be awarded to the obedient ones.

It is narrated in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" [*v.1 p.450*] that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had great love for his freed slave Sayyidina Thaubān رضى الله عنه. He too could not bear to be separated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Once when he appeared very grieved, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم enquired about this. He said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! I am not ill. Nothing grieves me except that I love to be in your company without which I grow very perturbed. When thinking of the Hereafter, it occurred to me that I will not be able to meet you because you will be in the high ranks of the Prophet عليه السلام. If I were to enter Heaven *(Jannah)*, I will be in the ranks much lower than yours. If I do not enter Heaven *(Jannah)*, then I fear that I will never see you again." On this occasion the above verse was revealed.

It is gleaned from this verse that despite the various ranks of Heaven *(Jannah)*, the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be able to meet each other.

BEING WITH THOSE WHOM ONE LOVES

Sayyidina Ibn Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that a person enquired from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "What do you say with regard to the person who loves a nation but has not reached them (in terms of knowledge and action)?" Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "A person shall be with those whom he loves." [*Mishkāt p. 426*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that a person once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as to when judgment day *(Qiyamah)* will take place. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "It is indeed very sad [that you ask about judgment *(Qiyamah)*]. Tell me what have you prepared for judgment *(Qiyamah)*?" He responded, "I have made no preparations except that I love Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم very much." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "You shall be with those whom you love." Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه says that besides the boon of Islām, no other thing made the Muslims as happy as did this fact (that a person will be with those whom he loves). [*Ibid*]

This hadith refers to both types of people. If a person loves the evil doers, he shall be with them, and if they be righteous people, he shall be with them. It also applied to both worlds. In this world also, it will be noticed that the bad accompany the bad, and the good accompany the good. In the Hereafter as well, each group will be with those whom they love.

It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "A person is on the track of his friend, so each of you should consider well whom you befriend." [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once spoke of Salāh and said, "Salāh shall be a light on the

Day of judgment *(Qiyamah)* for those who are particular about it, a proof [for his Belief *(Imān)*] and a means for salvation for him. For him who does not guard his Salāh it shall not be a light, nor a proof, nor a means of salvation. On the Day of judgment *(Qiyamah)*, he will be with the likes of Qārūn, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, Hāmān and Ubayy bin Khalf." [*Mishkāt p. 59*]

The commentators of hadith have explained that those who neglect Salāh may be divided into a few categories. Some neglect Salāh because of their wealth. They shall be the companions of Qārūn. Others neglect Salāh because of their involvement in government. Such people shall be with Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. Others neglect Salāh because of their occupations. They shall be raised with the likes of Hāmān (who was an advisor to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*). Then there are those who neglect Salāh due to their occupation in trade. These shall be with Ubayy bin Khalf [*he was a Mushrik who was killed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself*].

This hadith makes it clear that just as the good people shall accompany the good in the Hereafter, so too will the evil-doers join the ranks of their compatriots. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" [*v.5 p.78*] writes that the company of the illustrious souls mentioned in the verse does not mean that all shall be on the same stages in Heaven *(Jannah)*. Neither does it mean that the only similarity with them shall be entrance into Heaven *(Jannah)*. It means that the occupants of lower ranks shall be able to visit those of higher ranks despite the vast difference between them. Those of lower ranks shall be permitted to visit their companions occupying the upper levels of Heaven *(Jannah)* and vice versa.

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When two people so love each other for the sake of Allāh, then even though one be in the east and the other in the west, Allāh shall unite them on the Day of judgment *(Qiyamah)* and say, 'This is the person whom you loved for My pleasure." [*Mishkāt p.427*]

Sayyidina Rabī'ah bin Ka'ab رضى الله عنه related that he used to spend some nights in the company of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and would bring to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the water for ablution *(wudhū)* as well as other things of necessity. Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him what he desired most. He replied, "I desire your companionship in Heaven *(Jannah)*." Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked, "What else do you wish for?" He replied, "This is my only wish" Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "If that be the case, then assist me against yourself by performing Sajda in abundance [i.e. by performing excessive mandatory *(Nafl)* Salāh]." [*Muslim v.1 p.193*]

It is learnt from this hadith that so acquire the companionship of the pious, a person is required to engage in righteous deeds. After Belief *(Imān)*, Salāh is the greatest devotion. The more Salāh a person performs, the more prostration *(Sajda)* he will make. This abundance of prostrations *(Sajdas)* shall earn a person the companionship of the pious.

Where the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to 'help against himself', reference is made to the fact that the carnal self of a person will not allow a person to perform good deeds. He should, however, persevere and find the courage to continue.

Sayyidina Abu Saīd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The truthful and trustworthy trader shall be with the Prophet, Siddiqīn and martyrs." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed there are a hundred ranks in Heaven *(Jannah)* reserved for those who fight in Jihād *(religion war)*. The distance between every two ranks equals the distance between the heavens and the earth. When you ask Allāh for Heaven *(Jannah)*, then ask for "Jannatul Firdous" for it is the best and the highest rank above which is the throne of Rahmān and all the rivers of Heaven *(Jannah)* flow from it." [*Bukhari v.2 p.1 104*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Indeed the (average) person of Heaven *(Jannah)* shall gaze at those dwelling on higher balconies just as any of you (in this world) look up to the shining stars spread out in the east and west. This is due to the difference in their ranks." The Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم enquired, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Will these be the dwellings of the Prophet عليه السلام where no other shall be able to reach?" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "By the Being in whose hand is my life! Besides the Prophet عليه السلام, such people shall also live there who believe in Allāh and His prophets عليهم السلام." [*Bukhari v.1 p.46 1*]

The people upon whom Allāh had bestowed His bounty are of four types. The first are the Prophet عليه السلام. Second are the Siddiqīn. These were those people who never hesitated in the least to believe in the Prophet عليه السلام. They accepted upon the first bidding and then remained with the Prophet عليه السلام with the utmost sincerity till the end, sacrificing their lives and wealth in the cause of the Prophet عليه السلام. It is for this reason that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه achieved the title of "Siddique" (singular of Siddiqīn).

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once passed by Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه while he was cursing some of his slaves. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "Cursers and Siddiqīn? Never, by the Lord of the Ka'ba! (i.e. The Siddiqīn should never curse.)" Upon hearing this Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه freed some of his slaves and then later appeared before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying that he shall never do that again. [*Mishkāt p. 415*]

The third group is that of the Shuhada *(the martyrs)* who died fighting for the upliftment of the Dīn *(religion)*. The fourth are the Sālihīn. These are those people whose hearts are detached from sin and inclined towards good. They are engrossed in good actions with complete sincerity. This is indeed a lofty status and the Prophet عليه السلام were also endowed with the qualities of the Sālihīn *(righteous)*.

With regard to Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, the Qur'ān mentions that they were from the Sālihīn. Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام prayed to Allāh thus, *"Grant me death as a Muslim and unite me with Sālihīn"* (*Surah 12, verse 101*). Since mention was already made of the Prophet عليه السلام in the verse, the Sālihīn here refers to other people who were also blessed with these attributes.

A Muslim supplicates to Allāh in every rakāh of every Salāh that Allāh must allow him to be included in the ranks of these illustrious four groups. He recites in Surah Fatihah that Allāh must guide him to the path of *"those upon whom You have bestowed Your bounties."*

Although many people [sinners and disbelievers *(kuffār)* alike] are blessed with certain bounties of Allāh, the real bounties referred to here are those that have been conferred upon the above four groups of people. These people have been blessed with divine guidance, proximity to Allāh and spiritual purity. These are the assets that will allow them to prosper in the Hereafter, whereas the bounties conferred upon others are restricted to this world.

"These are indeed the best of companions." This is because their company shall be attained in Heaven *(Jannah)*. "Such is the bounty of Allāh. ."It is truly a bounty from Allāh that He has inspired His chosen bondsmen to obey His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, thereby earning the companionship of the pious in the Hereafter.

"..... and Allāh suffices as the Knower." He is Aware of every action of a person and will grant the reward (or punishment) that is due.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ خُذُوا۟ حِذْرَكُمْ فَٱنفِرُوا۟ ثُبَاتٍ أَوِ ٱنفِرُوا۟ جَمِيعًا ﴿٧١﴾ وَإِنَّ
مِنكُمْ لَمَن لَّيُبَطِّئَنَّ فَإِنْ أَصَٰبَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالَ قَدْ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىَّ إِذْ لَمْ أَكُن مَّعَهُمْ
شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٢﴾ وَلَئِنْ أَصَٰبَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمْ تَكُنۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُۥ
مَوَدَّةٌ يَٰلَيْتَنِى كُنتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾ ۞ فَلْيُقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَمَن يُقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٤﴾

(71) O you who believe, take your precautions and then advance in small detachments or larger ones. (72) Indeed amongst you are those who tarry. If a calamity befalls you he says, "Allāh has surely been gracious unto me since I was not present with them. (73) If a bounty from Allāh came to you, they will definitely say, as if there existed no love between yourselves and him, "Oh dear, if only I had been with them, then I would have attained a great success!" (74) So those who barter the Hereafter for the life of this world should fight in Allāh's way. Whosoever fights in Allāh 's way and is martyred or attains victory, soon We shall grant him a magnificent reward.

BEING ON GUARD AGAINST THE ENEMY AND THE ORDER TO WAGE JIHĀD *(RELIGION WAR)*

This verse instructs the Muslims to be wary of the enemy and to keep their arsenals in readiness for a war. If the occasion demands that a large army be dispatched, it should be so, and if only a small detachment is required, they should be detailed likewise.

THE CONDUCT OF THE HYPOCRITES

Allāh then discusses the behaviour of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. Since they pretended to be with the Muslims and lived with them, Allāh says that they are *"amongst you."*

'indeed amongst you are those who tarry." This was because they had no Belief *(Imān)*, they were natural cowards and could not bear to engage in war. Others have translated the verse to mean that they detained themselves from conscription into the Muslim army and loitered about. Another meaning is that they prevented others from participating, as they did in the battle of Uhud.

It often occurred that the inner condition of their hearts surfaced when they made certain statements of disbelief *(kufr)*. Allāh continues to say, *"If a calamity befalls you he (the hypocrite) says, 'Allāh has surely been gracious unto me since I was not present with them."*

On the other hand, when the Muslims are victorious in battle, acquiring much booty, these people change their tune, as Allāh says, *"If a bounty from Allāh came to you they will definitely say, as there existed no love between yourselves and him, 'Oh dear, if only I had been with them, then I would have attained a great success!"* The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* made these statements because they had no real affinity for the Muslims and were concerned only with the things of this world. Instead of rejoicing with the Muslims, they expressed remorse that they were unable to gain some material benefit.

"So those who barter the Hereafter for the life of this world should fight in Allāh's way." The hypocrites should also join in the battles to exalt the word of Allāh.

THE VIRTUE OF JIHĀD *(RELIGION WAR)* IN ALLĀH'S WAY

"Whosoever fights in Allāh 's way and is martyred or defeated, soon We shall grant him a magnificent reward." The person striving in Allāh's way will be rewarded irrespective of what is the outcome of the battle. The ultimate reward is that of the Hereafter while the transitory booty should not be the objective. The hypocrites, however, considered the booty to be *"a great success."*

This verse also alludes to the fact that even if the Muslims are granted the booty, their reward for Jihād *(religion war)* is not wasted since the booty was not their priority.

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَٱجْعَل
لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿75﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿76﴾

(75) What excuse do you have not to fight in Allāh's way and in defence of the weak men, women and children who cry out, 'Oh our Lord! Emancipate us from this town of oppressors, grant us a defender from Yourself and grant us a helper

from Yourself!" (76) The believers fight in Allāh's way and those who disbelieve fight in the way of Devil (Shaytān).... So fight the allies of devil (Shaytān), for indeed the plot of devil (Shaytān) is ever weak.

WHY IS JIHĀD *(RELIGION WAR)* NOT BEING WAGED DESPITE THE MOTIVES BEING PRESENT?

This verse censures the Muslims for not fighting in Jihād *(religion war)* despite the fact that the weak Muslims (who are unable to migrate) were suffering the abuse of the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* in Makkah. The verse implores them to march to the assistance of these poor folk who are praying, *"O our Lord! Emancipate us from this town of op ressors, grant us a defender from Yourself and grant us a helper from Yourself"'*

Allāh accepted their plea and the Muslims subsequently conquered Makkah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then appointed the Sahabi Sayyidina Itāb bin Usaid رضى الله عنه as governor of Makkah, who saw to the protection and safety of its people.

In a narration of Bukhari (*v.2 p.660*), Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that his father was also of those described as *"the weak men, women and children."* Others also in this predicament were Sayyidina Walīd bin Walīd رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Salma bin Hishām رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ayāsh bin Abi Rabi'ah رضى الله عنه. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to pray for them after the bowing *(Ruku)* in the final Raka'ah of Salāh until Allāh made it possible for them to migrate to Madinah. [*Mishkāt p. 113*]

THE DIFFERENCE OF INTENTION BETWEEN THE MUSLIM AND DISBELIEVER (KĀFIR) SOLDIERS

"The believers fight in Allāh 's way and those who disbelieve fight in the way of devil (Shaytān)." The Muslims fight for the pleasure of Allāh and so that the Dīn (religion) becomes predominant. The disbelievers (kuffār), though, desire that disbelief (kufr) be prevalent in the world and that Islām be destroyed."

"So fight the allies of devil (Shaytān)..." Although devil *(Shaytān)* assists his accomplices in battle, his aid is absolutely nothing compared to the help that Allāh renders to His sincere bondsmen. When the devout Muslims enter the battlefield calling out Allāh's praises, the army of devil *(Shaytān)* become helpless and are forced to flee. All their strategies and plots then fail, as Allāh says *'for indeed the plot of devil (Shaytān) is ever weak."*

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَوٰةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ
عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَٰعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْءَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ
وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧٧﴾

(77) Have you not seen those who were told, "Restrain your hands, establish Salāh and give Zakāh"? Then when fighting was ordained for them, suddenly a party from them feared the enemy as they should fear Allāh, or an even greater fear. They said, "Our Rabb (lord)! Why have You ordained fighting for us? Why did You not grant us respite for a little while?" Tell them, "The comfort of the world is a mere trifling. The Hereafter is best for those who are abstinent, and you shall not be oppressed even to the extent of the string of a date seed."

THOSE WHO EVADE FIGHTING IN JIHĀD *(RELIGION WAR)*

"Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.74*) reports a narration of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه from Nasa'ī and Hākim in which he says that once Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Auf رضى الله عنه and some other companions approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. (This incident occurred before the Hijrah). They said, "O Prophet of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم! Before embracing Islām, we were respected people. Now we suffer humiliation (therefore permit us to fight back)."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "I have been commanded to forgive and pardon, so do not fight" Later, when the Muslims immigrated to Madinah, the command to fight was issued. However, some people were still reluctant, whereupon the above verse was revealed.

The verse explains that at one time people requested to fight, but they were told rather to perform Salāh and give Zakāh. Then, when Jihād *(religion war)* was made incumbent on them, cowardice and fear gripped their hearts. The fear was not a mild one, but Allāh says with regard to some of them, "*a party from them feared the enemy as they should fear Allāh, or an even greater fear.*"

"They said, 'Our Lord, why have 'You ordained fighting for us? Why did You not grant us respite for a little while?" At this juncture the question arises that a statement such as the above does not behove an average Believer *(Mu'min)*, let alone the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, since it constitutes an objection to Allāh.

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه replies in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.453)* that the statement was made by the hypocrites. Since the hypocrites were found only in Madinah, this reply will necessitate that the request for Jihād *(religion war)* was also made in Madinah. This is possible because the verse mentions that instead of the request being fulfilled, the people were required to establish Salāh and give Zakāh. Given that Zakāh was ordained only in Madinah, it follows that this was told to them in Madinah. Therefore, the fact may be established that it was the Munāfiqīn *(hypocrites)* who asked why was Jihād *(religion war)* ordained.

Another reply to the question is that the complaint was made by certain Muslims who were not firmly grounded in Islām. These words escaped their tongues because of fear and indecisiveness. They later repented for this.

A third reply is that initially these people were Muslims but, after the order for Jihād *(religion war)* was enforced, hypocrisy entered their hearts and they shrunk away from Jihād *(religion war)*.

LOVE FOR THE WORLD IS THE CAUSE FOR COWARDICE

When people are imbued with a fervour for the Hereafter, being completely

disinclined from the world, they will care not whether they live or die. Giving their lives for the cause of Allāh will make no difference to them. For this reason, Allāh replies to the above complaints by saying, *"Tell them, 'The comfort of the world is a mere trifling."* Even though the world itself is so insignificant, the share every person receives from the world is even less.

"The Hereafter is best for those who are abstinent..." This entails abstinence from disbelief *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* and from major and minor sins. Even before the world is destroyed, the people of the world have long left it. To choose this instead of the everlasting Hereafter is sheer foolishness.

"......and you shall not be oppressed even to the extent of the string of a date seed." Not only will people be accorded their rewards in full, these will be multiplied many times over. The "string of a date seed" is mentioned only by way of example. People will not be oppressed at all by Allāh.

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا۟ يُدْرِككُّمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِى بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟
هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟ هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ عِندِكَ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
فَمَالِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا ﴿78﴾ مَّآ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَآ
أَصَابَكَ مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن نَّفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَٰكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿79﴾

(78) Wherever you may be, death will find you even though you be in lofty towers. If a good thing happens to them they say, "This is from Allāh!" When something adverse afflicts them they say, "This is because of you!" Tell them, "Everything is from Allāh!" What ails these people that they do not seem to understand anything? (79) Whatever good comes to you people is from Allāh, and whatever adversity afflicts you is from yourselves. We have sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] as a messenger to the people, and Allāh suffices as a Witness.

DEATH SHALL OVERTAKE YOU WHEREVER YOU MAY BE

People avoid Jihād *(religion war)* because they fear death. Death, however, shall find a person at the appointed hour irrespective of his whereabouts. None can escape it even if he tries to hide from it in high and mighty towers and fortresses.

It is narrated in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" *(v.1 p.453)* that when many Muslims were martyred at Uhud, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* said, *"If they were with us (in Madinah), they would not have died, nor have been killed."* In reply to this statement, Allāh revealed this verse telling them, *"Wherever you may be, death will find you even though you be in lofty towers."*

THE ABSURD REMARKS OF THE HYPOCRITES AND THE JEWS

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in Madinah, the Jews remarked that it was because of his arrival that the crops were being depleted. In

this way, whenever any adverse situation occurred, they attributed it to him. By doing this, they wished to impress upon the minds of the people of Madinah that a calamity had come to their town (Allāh forbid!). In good times, their tune changed, as Allāh says, *"If a good thing happens to them they say, 'This is from Allāh!' When something adverse afflicts them they say, 'This is because of you!"*

Allāh then replies to them by saying, *"Tell them, 'Everything is from Allāh!"* Favourable and unfavourable conditions are all from Allāh. He sends good conditions because of His mercy and the bad conditions are a result of man's actions.

"What ails these people that they do not seem to understand anything?" Their ignorance and obstinacy present an obstacle to their faculty of understanding. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.88*]

Thereafter Allāh makes clear the message for all to understand. He says, *"Whatever good comes to you is from Allāh, and whatever adversity afflicts you is from yourselves."* Allāh owes nothing to people. Whatever He gives them, even as rewards for their good deeds, is purely from His bounty. Adversities are due to their own evil deeds.

Allāh says in Surah Shura (*verse 30*), *"The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and Allāh pardons a great deal."* The benefit to a Believer *(Mu'min)* in trying circumstances is that his sins are forgiven thereby.

"We have sent you as a messenger to the people, and Allāh suffices as a Witness." This verse testifies to the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent for the entire humanity. Even though people may reject his apostleship, Allāh will always be there to testify to it.

According to other commentators, the verse means that Allāh is witness to the deeds of people and will give them what they deserve.

مَّن يُطِعِ ٱلرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ ٱللَّهَ ۖ وَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا (80)

(80) Whoever obeys the messenger has obeyed Allāh and whoever turns away, We have not sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] as a warder over them.

OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS OBEDIENCE TO ALLĀH

It is reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.455*) that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once mentioned, "Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allāh and whoever loves me loves Allāh." Upon hearing this, some of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* scoffed, "This person wants us to make him a god like how the Christians made Isā عليه السلام a god!" On this occasion, the above verse was revealed to confirm the statement of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Whatever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought was from Allāh and obedience to his commands constitute obedience to Allāh Himself, since the orders are His. The action of the Christians is totally different and cannot be compared.

THE BLASPHEMY OF REJECTING THE AHĀDĪTH

This verse contains the answer to those people in today's times who refute the Ahādīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They attempt to mislead people into believing that the words of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are not sufficient evidence for Islāmic law. The Qur'ān, in numerous verses, has accentuated the message of obedience to Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says in Surah Ahzāb, *"Undoubtedly in there is an excellent example for you in the Rasul (messenger) of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم."* [*Surah 33. verse 21*]

A verse of Surah A'rāf tells us, *"He [Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] permits for them the pure things and forbids them from that which is impure."* [*Surah 7, verse 157*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has expounded the laws of the Qur'ān and rejection of his Ahādīth as a source of law will, therefore, indicate rejection of the Qur'ān as well. These people have adopted the name of "Ahlul Qur'ān" *(people of the Qur'ān)*. Although claiming to follow the Qur'ān, they are actually refuting it because the Qur'ān commands that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم be obeyed and followed. Love for him will earn Allāh's love reciprocally. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Say [Oh Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم], 'If you love Allāh then follow me, Allāh will love you (in return)."* [*Surah 3, verse 31*]

THE TASK OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE

".... whoever turns away, We have not sent you as a warder over them." (i.e. You do not have to force them to accept. Your task is to convey the message). In a similar manner Allāh says in Surah Ghāshiya, *"Remind, for verily you are but one who reminds. You are not a warder over them."* [*Surah 88, verse 2 1/2*]

The authors of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" and "Durrul Manthūr" have quoted certain Scholars *(Ulama)* who are of the opinion that the above verse was abrogated by the instruction to wage Jihād *(religion war)* and to be stern with the enemy. This opinion will be feasible only if the verse instructed that Jihād *(religion war)* must not be waged in the case when people refuse to accept Islām. However, both attitudes may be applied as necessary i.e. at times it will be appropriate to wage Jihād *(religion war)* whereas there are other situations that will demand one to ignore the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and leave them to be. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not instructed to force people to accept Islām.

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِندِكَ بَيَّتَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ
يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٨١﴾ أَفَلَا
يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْءَانَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

(81) They say, "Obedience (is our task)!" But when they leave your presence, a party of them consults at night, in contradiction to what they said. Allāh records their nocturnal consultations. So let them be and trust in Allāh. Allāh suffices as

Defender. (82) Do they not ponder over the Qur'ān? If it were from any other being besides Allāh, they would have certainly found many discrepancies therein.

AN EVIL PRACTICE OF THE HYPOCRITES

This verse makes mention of how the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn),* in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to claim to be perfectly obedient to him. However, when they returned to their homes, they would consult with each other at night and plot schemes that were in brazen contrast to their claims. They would then disobey the clear instructions of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says, *"Allāh records their nocturnal consultations"* i.e. Allāh shall punish them accordingly.

"So let them be and trust in Allāh (and bother not to take revenge because) *Allāh suffices as Defender."* Allāh shall protect the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* from all the evil schemes of the enemy. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.52*]

ENCOURAGEMENT TO PONDER OVER THE QUR'ĀN

"Do they not ponder over the Qur'ān? If it were from any other being besides Allāh, they would have certainly found many discrepancies therein." In this way, any person will acknowledge that the Qur'ān is undoubtedly from Allāh and that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is Prophet of Allāh.

If another had written the Qur'ān, there would have been inconsistencies in all aspects, be it in the stories, the eloquence or the literary style. At times, certain information will be correct and at times they will be incorrect. However, the Qur'ān shows no hint of imperfection - neither in its text, nor in its meaning.

The challenge of the Qur'ān to produce a single Surah the like of any in the Qur'ān remains unanswered to this day. None can even raise any objections against the Qur'ān. Those who have raised any have been conclusively answered by the Qur'ān itself or by the astute men of learning. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.9213]*

WHO IS COMPETENT ENOUGH TO PONDER OVER THE QUR'ĀN?

Although any person may exert himself in attempting to understand the Qur'ān, those who do not possess sufficient knowledge may fail to understand certain aspects of it. In that event, they should consult those who are qualified in the subject. The levels of these knowledgeable people also vary and each of them may differ in their analysis of certain verses. It requires a special insight to be able to delve into the depth of meaning and eloquence of the Qur'ān.

In a similar manner, there are also various levels of interpretation about the derivation of laws. The jurists (*"A'immah Mujtahidīn"*) went to great lengths to fathom the depth and wisdom of the verses to derive the various laws and injunctions of Islām. The Scholars *(Ulama)* after them also exerted themselves in this effort.

To understand the Qur'ān, it is not sufficient merely to be able to speak a bit of Arabic and read a few books here and there. For this, a person is required to be well grounded in numerous sciences covering a large array of subjects.

THE ABOMINATION OF "TAFSĪR BIR RĀ'IY"

People complain that the "Molvis" hold the monopoly when it comes to explaining the, Qur'ān. These complainants claim that since they are also people of understanding, why are they not allowed to interpret the Qur'ān according to their understanding? Others claim that it is not even necessary to resort to the explanations of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when interpreting the Qur'ān (Allāh forbid!).

They seek to remove the one upon whom the Qur'ān was revealed along with his students and those who learn from them to this day. This type of myopic interpretation is what is referred to as "Tafsīr bir Ra'iy". These people act without knowledge and mislead others with their folly.

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "The person who comments on the Qur'ān according to his personal opinion should prepare his abode in Hell."

Sayyidina Jundub رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The one who comments on the Qur'ān according to his personal opinion is erroneous even though he be correct." [*Mishkāt p. 35*]

These Ahādīth are explicit in their prohibition of Tafsīr (commenting on the Qur'ān) without the relevant knowledge ("Tafsīr bir Ra'iy"). Even if a person says something correct, he will be considered to be incorrect because he has assumed a position of which he is not worthy.

The statement that the "Molvis" have a monopoly over the commentary of the Qur'ān is erroneous. It is like asking, "Why do the doctors have a monopoly in the medical science?" or like saying, "Why do the politicians have a monopoly in politics?" It is just as absurd as asking, "Why do engineers have a say in matters of engineering?"

People also ask that since Allāh has mentioned that the Qur'ān has been made easy, why can every person not interpret it as he wills? The reply is that the Qur'ān is indeed simple, but only with the knowledge of its principles and related concepts. No subject is simple without the relevant knowledge. For example, it is easy to swallow a sweet. However, before this becomes possible, it is necessary to prepare the delicacy, requiring all the relevant ingredients and preparation. Without these premeditated arrangements, even this simple task becomes almost impossible.

The person who knows a bit of Arabic is like the one who has the ingredients for a sweet dish, but is unable to prepare it and cannot eat it. To understand the Qur'ān, it is necessary to be able to grapple with numerous sciences that are too many to mention.

It is indeed sad to see that those who are ignorant wish to interpret the Qur'ān whereas those who have attained proficiency in its various related sciences tremble even at the mere thought of interpreting!

THE CAUTION OF SAYYIDINA ABU BAKR رضى الله عنه

There was none more knowledgeable about the Qur'ān, after the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, than Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. When he was asked the meaning of a verse of Surah Abas, he said, "Which sky will shade me and which earth will carry me if I comment on the book of Allāh what I know not. *[Tārikhul Khulafa]*

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMENTATORS OF THE QURĀ'N

The commentators first have to interpret a verse according to explanations given in other verses because many verses serve as interpretation of others. Thereafter they should seek an interpretation from the Ahādīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Any person whose interpretation contradicts that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will not be considered.

Allāh says in verse 105 of Surah Nisā, *"Undoubtedly We have revealed to you the Book with the truth so that you may judge between people by that which Allāh has shown you."*

If an explanation is not found in the Qur'ān nor in the Ahādīth, it should be sought from the sayings of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم. They had a deep understanding of the Qur'ān and were present when it was being revealed. They were aware of each circumstance when a verse was revealed. They were also blessed with the company of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, through which their knowledge and perception were perfected. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught them the words of the Qur'ān as well as their meanings.

Sayyidina Utmān bin Afān رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه report that they would not continue learning the Qur'ān until they mastered the knowledge of the previous ten verses taught to them and had practised them.

A WARNING TO UNQUALIFIED COMMENTATORS

It is an accepted fact, that whenever a person studies a book on any particular subject, he makes every attempt to understand and remember what he has learnt. It is, therefore, not possible that the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم studied the Qur'ān without understanding its concepts from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The person who attempts to comment on the Qur'ān without a deep knowledge of the Ahādīth and Tafsīr (commentary) of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم has indeed strayed into deviation even though he be fluent in Arabic. It is also of paramount importance that his beliefs and actions conform with the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَٱتَّبَعْتُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

(83) When any matter of safety or fear comes to them they broadcast it. If they had referred the matter to the messenger and those of them who have understanding, then it would, surely be known to those of them who have insight. If it were not for the grace of Allāh upon you and His mercy, you would surely follow Shaytān save a few (of you).

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST PUBLICISING UNVERIFIED NEWS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF REFERRING TO KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS

The following detailed incident appears in Muslim (*v.1 p.480*). Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once separated from his wives. When the news reached the people, they assumed that he had divorced them. Consequently this news spread among the people.

When Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه received permission to see the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم he asked Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether he had divorced his wives. When Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied in the negative, Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه requested permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to clarify the matter in the Mosque *(Masjid)*, where the people were all gathered.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted him, he stood at the door of the Mosque *(Masjid)* and announced in a loud voice, "the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not divorce his wives." On this occasion the above verse was revealed.

AN EVIL PRACTICE OF THE HYPOCRITES

A narration appears in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" [*v.1 p.456]* in which it is narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to despatch numerous armies to various destinations. When these armies returned, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* used to ask them the result of the expedition. Before the army could reach the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, these Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* used to broadcast the news which would cause hurt to the Muslims in the event that the Muslims were defeated. It was with regard with this practice that. Allāh revealed the above verse.

In this verse Allāh advises the Muslims to refer information to the people of understanding. They will delve in to the depths of the matter whereby incomplete news is not made public. The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* behaved as they did with intent to cause harm to the Muslims.

The word "Yastambitūna" (translated above as *"those who have insight")* literally refers to extracting water from the depths of the earth. In this context, it refers to people who possess the extra special ability to delve into matters and extract the truth.

THE GRACE OF ALLĀH AND HIS MERCY

"If it were not for the grace of Allāh upon you and His mercy, you would surely follow devil (Shaytān) save a few (of you)." Allāh has sent to man His grace in the form of the Dīn *(religion)* of Islām and His mercy in the form of the Qur'ān. If it were not for these, people would have been the servants of devil *(Shaytān)* except those who were practising upon the teachings of the previous Prophet عليه السلام. Being able to recognise the oneness of Allāh in an environment of polytheism

(shirk) (as certain Arabs had done) was also due to Allāh's mercy, but the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān are special mercies. It is for this reason that they are mentioned exclusively. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v.1 p.456*]

Lessen 1: The verse and the circumstances of revelation both indicate that every piece of information should not be accepted off hand since there exists a strong possibility that it may be inaccurate. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "It is sufficient as a lie for a person to inform others of whatever he hears." [*Muslim, in the introduction*]

Not only do people today publicise unverified events, but they actually fabricate them. People are specially employed by organisations and governments to disseminate misinformation and slanted information. The Qur'ān advises that even the truth should be announced with caution because it may cause harm to someone (as the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* used to do).

Lesson 2: Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.456*) that the verse alludes to the permissibility of analogical deduction (*Qiyās*). Certain laws and injunctions may be derived directly from a verse or a narration. However, others have to be extracted by delving into the verses and extracting a law based on one's knowledge of Dīn *(religion)*. This is what is meant by "Qiyās". This will, of course, not be permissible when a law is directly obtainable from a verse.

When a ruling is required on an issue that is not discussed specifically in the Qur'ān and Sunnah, it will then be necessary to resort to Qiyās. This was practised by the "A'immah Mujtahidīn" and is still practicable by those who have in-depth knowledge of the necessary sciences. If it is practised in today's times, reference must also be made to the rulings of previous Scholars *(Ulama)* in similar situations. If this is not done, there exists a very strong possibility of deviation, as has been witnessed with many in the past, especially those who wish to deduce rulings without the relevant knowledge and piety *(Taqwa)*.

فَقَٰتِلۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفۡسَكَۚ وَحَرِّضِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَۖ عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَكُفَّ بَأۡسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْۚ وَٱللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأۡسٗا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلٗا (84)

(84) So fight in Allāh's way! You are only responsible for yourselves, and urge on the believers. Soon Allāh will curb the might of those who disbelieve. Allāh is indeed more Powerful in might and more Potent in punishing.

FIGHT IN ALLĀH'S WAY AND URGE THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)*

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.1 p.457*) that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم negotiated an undertaking with Abu Sufyān after the battle of Uhud that they will meet again in battle in the month of Dhul Qa'dah at Badr. Accordingly, Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the Muslims to march on the appointed date. When some people became upset at this, the above verse was

revealed.

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he is responsible only for himself. He should, therefore, proceed alone if need be. Allāh shall render His assistance, but he should continue to encourage the Muslims. Consequently, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mustered a force of 70 horsemen. There was no battle since the disbelievers *(kuffār)* did not turn up.

"Soon Allāh will curb the might of those who disbelieve." This Allāh did. With the help of Allāh, the Muslims were always victorious because *"Allāh is indeed more Powerful in might and more Potent in punishing."*

مَّن يَشْفَعْ شَفَٰعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُن لَّهُۥ نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا ۖ وَمَن يَشْفَعْ شَفَٰعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُن لَّهُۥ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّقِيتًا ﴿85﴾

(85) Whoever makes a worthy intercession will receive a share of Whoever makes an evil intercession will receive the sin for it. Allāh has Power over all things.

THE REWARD OF A WORTHY INTERCESSION AND THE SIN OF AN EVIL ONE

When a person intercedes on behalf of another for a worthwhile cause, he will be rewarded for it. However, if the intercession is to attain evil results, then the intercessor shall share in the sin. Certain people are unable to express themselves because of poor language and expression or a lack of knowledge, etc. The person who intervenes and attempts to assist them in their task shall be greatly rewarded by Allāh, even though he may not succeed.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "Intercede and you will be rewarded! Allāh decrees what He wills on the tongue of His messenger." [*Bukhari v.2 p.891*] This means that whatever intercession is brought before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم shall earn the intercessor reward, even though the decision may prove contrary to expectations.

A narration is reported in "Shamā'il Tirmidhi" in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says, "Convey to me the need of those who are unable to present their needs before me. Verily the person who conveys to a leader the need of those who cannot do so themselves, then Allāh will keep their feet steadfast on the Day of Judgment."

When someone intercedes for another for employment in a Unlawful *(Harām)* institution, or to sell Unlawful *(Harām)* items, etc, then the intercessor shall share in the sin. People do this because those on whose behalf they intervene are friends, relatives or the children of friends. They do not consider whether the action they are assisting in is permissible or not. They do not realise that they will also share in the collective sins of all those who are led to sin due to their action.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم say, "The person who intervenes before the enforcement of any of Allāh's penalties is actually opposing Allāh. The one who defends falsehood knowing that it is false, shall be under the constant displeasure of Allāh. The one who attributes to a Believer *(Mu'min)* what is not in him, Allāh shall enter him into the blood and puss of the people of Hell. This will be the condition unless he retracts his statement." [*Mishkāt p. 315*]

Lesson: A woman belonging to the tribe of Bani Makhzum once stole during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Since she belonged to a noble family, the Quraish disliked that her hand be cut. They approached Sayyidina Usāma bin Zaid رضى الله عنه to intercede on her behalf because he was very dear to Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم When he did so, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Are you intervening between a penalty of Allāh?" Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood up and addressed the people, "The nations of the past were destroyed because when a member of a noble family stole, they overlooked it, but when someone of a lower lineage stole they enforced the punishment. I swear by Allāh that even if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم stole, I would have her hand cut off!" [*Bukhari v.2 p.1003*]

Just as it is not permissible to intercede for sinful purposes, it is also prohibited for one to intercede for the appointment of a person who is incompetent. Should such a person be employed when he is incapable, he will misappropriate the responsibility (especially when this involves public service).

Lesson: Intercession merely means that a person who is truly in need of something, appoints another to secure it on his behalf. It is not binding on the intercessor that he has to secure the object of his quest. He will try to the best of his abilities and, if he is unsuccessful, the other person has no right to be displeased. None may be forced to intercede for another.

Lesson: It is not permissible to accept any remuneration, nor any gift for intercession. Anything received in this manner will be considered to be a bribe.

Allāh concludes with the words, *"Allāh has Power over all things."* None can prevent Him from conferring rewards, nor from punishing. Imām Rāghib رحمة الله عليه writes in his book "Mufarradāt" that the word "muqīta" used in this verse may be translated in three ways viz. That Allāh *"has power over all things," "is the Protector,"* and *"Vigilant over everything."*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that yet another meaning of the word is that Allāh provides food for every living being. Therefore, the person who intercedes for another should never fear that he will ever be short of sustenance because Allāh provides for all.

(86) When you are greeted with a prayer, then reply with a better prayer, or return (the same). Most surely Allāh shall take account of everything.

THE LAWS GOVERNING SALĀM (GREETING) AND ITS REPLY

The actual meaning of the Arabic word "tahiyyah" (translated above as *"a prayer")* is a prayer that Allāh should keep one alive. This word is used with the word "salām." This greeting will therefore be a prayer that Allāh keeps one living in peace.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SALĀM

• Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When Allāh created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and instilled the soul within him, he sneezed. Thereupon he said, *"Alhamdu Lillah*! (All praise to Allāh!)" Allāh said, *"Yar Hamu Kallāh*! (May Allāh have mercy on you!)" Thereafter Allāh told him, "O Ādam, go to those angels over there and greet them by saying, *'As Salāmu Alaykum*! (Peace be on you!)" Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام complied, whereupon the angels replied, *"Wa Alaykumus Salām Wa Rahmatullah*! (Peace be on you too, and Allāh's mercy!)" When he returned, Allāh told him, "This will be the greeting for you and between your progeny after you." [*Mishkāt p. 400*]

This is the method in which Muslims are expected to greet at all times. In this manner they will be constantly praying for the safety and peace of each other.

ADOPTING THE GREETINGS OF NON-MUSLIMS

The English greetings of "Good morning!" "Good evening!" and "Good night!" are not a prayer *(du'ā)* as is the salām. By stating the good condition of the day, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* merely wish to express the same to the person being greeted. Whereas the English greeting is only restricted to the particular part of the day mentioned (morning, evening, etc), the salām conveys a prayer of peace till eternity.

Sayyidina Imrān bin Husain رضى الله عنه narrates that before the advent of Islām they used to greet each other with the words, "May Allāh keep your eyes cool!" and "May Allāh make your morning good!" He says that when they became Muslims, they were prohibited from these forms of greeting. [*Abu Dawūd*]

This hadith teaches us that it is prohibited to greet in a manner besides that of salām. It will therefore not be permissible to use greetings like "Good morning," and even the Arabic terms like "Sabāhal khayr" and "Masāhal khayr" (which may be translated as "Good morning" and "Good evening").

There are many words of greetings in vogue throughout the world. However, none are better than the Islāmic greeting of salām. It displays the most love and is a most apt prayer *(du'ā)* for a person since it invokes Allāh to safeguard one from every type of difficulty.

Since the word "Salām" is also one of the attributes of Allāh, certain commentators have mentioned that when one greets, it means, "May Allāh, who is the giver of peace, take you in His safety and custody, keeping you in peace forever."

THE VIRTUE OF EXCESSIVE SALĀM

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "None of you can enter Heaven *(Jannah)* without being a Believer *(Mu'min)*, and none can be a Believer *(Mu'min)* until you have love between yourselves. Should I not show you an action whereby you will inculcate love between yourselves? Make salām widespread between yourselves." [*Muslim v.1 p.54*]

Salām should be made with all Muslims whether one recognises them or not. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said, "When you meet a Muslim, greet him with salām." [*Mishkāt p. 133*]

Just as it is the right of a Muslim that he should be greeted, it is his right that his salām be replied to. Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A Muslim has five rights upon other Muslims.

(1) To reply to his greeting,

(2) To visit him when he is sick,

(3) To accompany his funeral bier,

(4) To accept his invitation, and

(5) To reply to his sneeze (by saying, "*Yar Hamu Kallāh*" when he says "*Alhamdu Lillah*" after sneezing)." [*Muslim v.2 p.2 13*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what is the best action in Islām. The reply was, "To feed people and to greet those whom you know as well as those whom you do not know." [*Bukhari v.1 p.6*]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When any of you meets your (Muslim) brother, he should greet him with salām. If thereafter any tree or wall separates them, they should greet again when reuniting," [*Abu Dawūd*]

THE RIGHTS OF THE ROAD

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not sit on the roadside. If you have to do so, then fulfill its rights." When someone enquired what these rights were, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "*The gazes should be lowered (so as not to look at what is prohibited), none should be harmed, greetings should be replied to, good should be enjoined and evil should be prohibited.*" [*Muslim v.2 p.2 13*]

SALĀM MUST BE MADE WHEN ENTERING A HOME OR ATTENDING A GATHERING

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you attend a gathering; greet, and if you find a suitable place, be seated. Then when you leave, greet again, for the second salām is just as important as the first." [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Qatadah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you enter a home, greet the inhabitants with salām and when you

leave, greet them once more." [*Mishkāt p.399*]

GREETING THE PEOPLE OF ONE'S HOUSEHOLD

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "O son! When you enter your home, greet your housefolk with salām, for this will be a source of blessings for you." [*Tirmidhi*]

THE VIRTUE OF INITIATING THE SALĀM

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who greets first is free of pride." [*Mishkāt p. 400*]

Sayyidina Abu Umāmah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "Verily the person who is closest to Allāh is the one who greets first." [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.350*]

The verse instructs that when one is greeted with "*As Salāmu Alaykum*", he should at the very least reply by saying, "*Wa Alaykumus Salām.*" In this way the obligation will be fulfilled. It will be best that he replies in a better manner, as the angels did when greeted by Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. They added the phrase, "*Wa Rahmatullah.*" If a person uses this addition to greet (by saying, "*As Salāmu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullah*"), then the person being greeted should reply by adding, "*Wa Barakātuh*" at the end (i.e. he should reply by saying, "*Wa Alaykumus Salām Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakātuh*").

Sayyidina Imrān bin Husain رضى الله عنه reports that a person once greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, "*As Salāmu Alaykum*!" Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied accordingly, where after the person was seated. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "He received ten rewards." Thereafter another person entered and greeted by saying, "*As Salāmu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullah!*" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, after replying, said that this person had earned twenty rewards.

Then a third person entered with the greeting, "*As Salāmu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakātuh!*" Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that this person had acquired thirty rewards. Then another person entered. He greeted by saying, "*As Salāmu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakātuhu Wa Maghfiratuh!*" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that this person had received forty rewards and that his rewards were still multiplying. This hadith has been narrated in Abu Dawūd. Tirmidhi has also recorded it, but without the words, "wa Maghfiratuh." Imām Tirmidhi رحمة الله عليه says that the hadith is "hasan" and then mentions that other Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم like Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Sahl bin Hunaif رضى الله عنه have also reported similar Ahādīth.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه narrates in his Tafsīr (*v.1 p.531*) from Ibn Jarīr رحمة الله عليه that when someone greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the addition of "*wa Rahmatullah,*" he said, "*Wa Alayk*! (Upon you too!) You have left nothing for us, so we will reply just as you had greeted." After narrating this Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه mentions that it is learnt from this hadith that there is no further addition to the salām after "*Wa Barakātuh.*"

Imām Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه is also of this opinion (*v.5 p.299*) that nothing should

be added after "*Wa Barakātuh.*" The same has been mentioned in "Durrul Mukhtār". Since the narration of Abu Dawūd with the addition of "*Wa Maghfiratuh*" is a weak narration, the jurists have ignored it.

Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه narrates that a person once greeted Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه with the addition of other words after "*Wa Barakātuh.*" Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه told him, "Indeed the salām terminates at 'barakah." Sayyidina Imām Muhammad رحمة الله عليه has also recorded this narration in his Mu'atta. Thereafter he writes, "We accept this. A person should stop after saying, '*Wa Barakātuh,*' for indeed it is best to follow the Sunnah."

In his book Fat'hul Bāri, Hāfidh Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه, has accumulated all those Ahādīth in which additions to "*Wa Barakātuh*" have been narrated. He writes that although these Ahādīth are weak, their numbers lend strength to them. He then mentions that to add to "*Wa Barakātuh*" will not be considered to be Sunnah, but is permissible. Allāh knows best.

SOME RULINGS

Ruling: It is Sunnah to greet, but compulsory *(Wājib)* to reply. This is from those things wherein the reward of the Sunnah exceeds that of the compulsory *(Wājib)*.

Ruling: In the words of the hadith, a person, before entering a home, should say, "*As Sallāmu Alaykum,* may I enter?" This is to be repeated thrice. If no permission is granted after the third time, one should retreat. One may not enter, nor look into another's home without permission.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not allow that person to enter who does not begin with salām!" i.e. The person who does not make salām before requesting permission to enter. [*Mishkāt p. 400/1*]

Ruling: When someone conveys the salāms of another, the recipient should include the conveyer in the reply. For example, he should say, "*Alayka Wa Alayhis Salām!* (Salāms to you and him!)." When a Sahabi رضى الله عنه sent salāms to Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with his son, he replied, "Salāms to you and your father!" [*Abu Dawūd p.354*]

Ruling: Sayyidina Abu Ayyūb Ansāri رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "It is not permissible for a person to sever ties with his brother for more than three days; when they meet then each ignores the other. The best of them is the one who initiates the salām." [*Bukhari v.2 p.897*]

Ruling: Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "It is not permissible for a Believer *(Mu'min)* to sever ties with another Believer *(Mu'min)* for more than three days. When three days have expired, they should meet and greet with salām. If the one being greeted replies, both will share in the reward. If he does not reply, he will be sinful and the one who greeted will be absolved of the sin of severing ties." [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p. 17*]

Three days is the limit. Relations should be restored before this. However, a person's pride will have to be swallowed before greeting. It is for this reason that the reward for taking the initial step is so great, as the above narration of Bukhari

mentioned, "The best of them is the one who initiates the salām."

Ruling: A rider should greet the one on foot, the one on foot should greet the one who is sitting, a small group should greet a larger group and youngsters should greet the elders. [*Bukhari v.2 p.92*]

Ruling: If a seated group is greeted, the reply of one of them will suffice. Similarly, if an individual of a passing group greets, it will suffice for the rest of them. [*Abu Dawūd v.2 p.352*]

Ruling: One's Salāh will be nullified if one verbally greets another person while performing Salāh or if one replies to another person's greeting; even though both actions may be forgetfully. However, if the greeting was by an indication of the hand (i.e. not verbal), the Salāh will be rendered Makrūh *(reprehensible but not nullified).*

Ruling: It is Makrūh *(reprehensible)* to speak to or greet the following people. If they are greeted, they are not obliged to reply. They include those who are performing Salāh, reciting the Qur'ān, engaged in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, teaching hadith, delivering or listening to a sermon, learning or teaching Dīn *(religion)*,. reciting the Talbiya, giving the Adhān or the Iqāmah, and those judges presiding over a court hearing.

Ruling: People engaged in Unlawful *(Harām)* activities like playing chess, etc. should also not be greeted. The person in the toilet must also not be greeted.

Ruling: A disbeliever *(kāfir)* should not be greeted with salām.

Ruling: It is Makrūh *(reprehensible)* to greet young women who are not one's Mahram.

Ruling: Salām should not be made to those who are sleeping or intoxicated.

Ruling: It is Makrūh *(reprehensible)* to greet those who are engaged in singing and dancing, as well as those who race pigeons.

Ruling: It is not permissible to greet a person who is an open sinner.

The above was extracted from Durrul Mukhtār and Raddul Mukhtār (*v.1 p.414/5*)

"Most surely Allāh shall take account of everything." If every person keeps this in mind, he will not neglect the rights of others, nor those of Allāh.

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

(87) There is no deity except Allāh. He will most definitely gather all of you on a day about which there is no doubt. Who is it that speaks more truthfully than Allāh?

THERE IS NO DEITY BESIDES ALLĀH, WHO SHALL GATHER ALL ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

This verse reiterates the beliefs in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and resurrection. That day is inevitable when every person shall be given what he deserves. Allāh has informed of this event and there is none more truthful than Him.

۞ فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِئَتَيْنِ وَاللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوا ۚ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَهْدُوا مَنْ
أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾ وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا
فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً ۖ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ
وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ
يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَن يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ
يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ ۚ فَإِنِ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ
وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾ سَتَجِدُونَ آخَرِينَ
يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلَّ مَا رُدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ
يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ وَيَكُفُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ
ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكُمْ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

(88) What ails you that you have divided into two parties with regard to the hypocrites, whereas Allāh has cast them back because of what they earned? Do you wish to guide him whom Allāh has sent astray? You shall never find a road for the one whom Allāh has sent astray. (89) They long that you should disbelieve as they disbelieved, so that you may be equal with them. So do not choose any of them as your friends until they migrate in the path of Allāh. If they turn back, then grab hold of them and put them to death wherever you find them. Do not make any of them your friend nor ally. (90) except those who seek refuge with a nation with whom you have a pact; or they come to you in a condition that their hearts forbid them from fighting you or from fighting their nation. If Allāh willed, He would have given them sovereignty over you, then they would have surely fought you. If they keep away from you, do not fight you and maintain peace with you, then Allāh does not allow any path for you against them. (91) Soon you will find others who wish to remain secure from you and remain secure from their nation. Each time that they are returned to anarchy, they turn back thereto. If they do not keep away from you, do not maintain the peace between you and do not restrain their hands, then grab hold of them and put them to death wherever you find them. Against such people We have granted you a clear warrant.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH THE HYPOCRITES AND ENEMIES?

"Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.107*) reports from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that this verse refers to those people who migrated from Makkah to Madinah and then turned apostate. They requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for permission to return to Makkah so that they may gather their trading stock and resume business. The Muslims were divided about these people. Some called them hypocrites while others considered them to be Muslims. To resolve their division, Allāh revealed the above verse, exposing their hypocrisy and ordering their execution.

According to Sayyidina Dhahhāk رحمة الله عليه, the verse refers to those people who remained in Makkah. Although they claimed to be Muslims, they did not migrate. Consequently, the Muslims were divided about them. Some considered them to be hypocrites and severed all ties with them. Others maintained their relationship with them. The verse was then revealed to clear the dispute and instructed the Muslims not to associate with them until they migrate.

After reporting these two narrations, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" records the following narration of Bukhari (*v.2 p.660*), Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'ī and Ahmad. It is reported that when the Muslims were marching towards Uhud, a group of Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* turned back. The Muslims were divided about their condition. Some wanted them killed, while others did not. The above verse was revealed on this occasion in which Allāh says, *"What ails you that you have divided into two parties with regard to the hypocrites, whereas Allāh has cast them back (causing them to return from the rest of the army) because of what they earned? Do you wish to guide him who Allāh has sent astray? You shall never find a road for him who Allāh has sent astray.*

Thereafter, Allāh makes mention of the evil schemes of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. Allāh says, *"They long that you should disbelieve as they disbelieved, so that you may be equal with them. So do not choose any of them as your friends until they migrate in the path of Allāh."* The migration is qualified by the words *"in the path of Allāh."* This is because the migration that is not for Allāh's pleasure, but for worldly gains, is no migration at all.

"If they turn back then grab hold of them and put them to death wherever you find them. Do not make any of them your friend nor ally..." When considering all the verses, it comes to light that the verses referred to all three types of Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* mentioned in the above three narrations. However, the execution order did not apply to all of them because the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* of Madinah were not executed.

The order for execution and separation applied to all the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* *"except those who seek refuge with a nation with whom you have a pact."* Those were also excluded from the instruction who *"come to you in a condition that their hearts forbid them from fighting you or from fighting their nation."*

"If Allāh willed He would have given them sovereignty over you, then they would have surely fought you. If they keep away from you, do not fight you and maintain peace between you, then Allāh does not allow any path for you against them." This means

that in the above case, the Muslims may not fight them.

Up to this point, two groups were mentioned. The first is that group who accepted Islām but refused to migrate, or they opted to return to the disbelievers *(kuffār)* state after migrating. The second group are those who enter into a pact with the Muslims not to fight or those who join with such people that already have a pact with the Muslims.

Thereafter Allāh goes on to mention the third group. *"Soon you will find others who wish to remain secure from you and remain secure from their nation. Each time that they are returned to anarchy, they turn back thereto."* This means that these people are prone to attack the Muslims at the slightest instigation, thus breaking their pact.

When this type of situation arises Allāh advises, *"If they do not keep away from you, do not maintain the peace between you and do not restrain their hands, then grab hold of them and put them to death wherever you find them. Against such people We have granted you a clear warrant (to kill them)."*

In the initial stages of Islām, every Muslim was required to migrate to Madinah. This was a precondition to his Imān and Muslim were not allowed to associate with those who did not migrate. However, when Makkāh was conquered, this compulsion was waived. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is no migration after the conquest! Now the only obligations are one's intention and Jihād *(religion war)*. So hasten when you are summoned to Jihād *(religion war)*!" [*Mishkāt p. 331*]

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَن يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَـًٔا ۚ وَمَن قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَـًٔا فَتَحْرِيرُ
رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَصَّدَّقُوا۟ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍ
عَدُوٍّ لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍۭ
بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَـٰقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ
مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿92﴾

(92) It does not behove a Believer (Mu'min) to kill another Believer (Mu'min) except in error. Whoever kills a Believer (Mu'min) in error is obliged to set free a believing slave and pay the blood money to his (the deceased's) family; unless they pardon it. If the murdered person is from a nation that are enemies to you, but he is a Believer (Mu'min), then a believing slave is to be set free. If he (the murdered person) is from a nation with whom you have a pact, the blood money is incumbent, which should be paid to his family as well as setting free a believing slave. The one who cannot find a slave should fast for two consecutive months as a means of repentance as prescribed by Allāh. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise.

THE LAWS OF MANSLAUGHTER *(UNINTENTIONAL MURDER)*

The penalty for intended murder is Qisās (*death penalty*) as has been, discussed in Surah Baqarah. To kill a person is a major sin, which every Muslim should abstain from. For this reason Allāh says that it does not behove a Believer *(Mu'min)* that he kill another, even a disbeliever *(kāfir)*.

Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"And do not kill* a *soul that Allāh has forbidden except with a warrant."* (*Surah 17, verse 33*). It will be permitted to kill an antagonistic disbeliever *(kāfir)* and one not offered security by the Muslim state. Similarly, the married Muslim who has committed adultery can be executed as well as that Muslim who intentionally murders a person (*this is Qisās*).

Since the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth have issued such stern and terse warnings against murdering a Muslim, it is incomprehensible for any Muslim to murder another. The only way in which this reprehensible action be perpetrated is unintentionally. This is termed as "Qatl Khat' a". Qatl khat'a is of two types viz.

1. **"Khat'a fil Qasd"**: By way of example, let us assume that a hunter saw what he thought was an animal. Only after he shot it was it determined that target was a human. Another example is that he thought that the target was a disbeliever *(kāfir)* adversary in battle. After firing, it is discovered that he shot a Muslim. (In both of the above cases, the action was sure, but the intention proved erroneous).

2. **"Khat'a fil Fi'al"**: An example of this type is where a person aims to fire at a designated target, but misses and hits a person instead. (In this case the action was erroneous).

In both types of manslaughter, "Kaffāra" *(death penalty)* and "Diyah" *(blood money)* are due from the murderer. These, as well as the Qisās, have been instituted by the Shari'ah to safeguard the lives of people. It is indeed sad that the so-called Muslim countries do not even enforce these laws. By so doing, they have caused the lives of people to become worthless. On the contrary people are extremely safe in those countries where these laws are instated.

THE LAWS OF KAFFARA *(DEATH PENALTY)* AND DIYAH *(BLOOD MONEY)*

"Whoever kills a Believer in error is obliged to set free a believing slave and pay the blood money to his (the deceased's) family; unless they pardon it." Once the heirs of the murdered person forgo the Diyah *(blood money)*, it will no longer be liable from the murderer. If any one of them remits his share, only that share will be remitted.

"If the murdered person is from a nation that are enemies to you, but he (the murdered person) is a Believer *(Mu'min), then a believing slave is to be set free."* The blood money shall be waived in this case. This is so because the blood money *(Diyah)* is a form of inheritance and there are no links of inheritance between Muslims and disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

"If he (the murdered person) is from a nation with whom you have a pact, the blood money is incumbent, which should be paid to his family as well as setting free a believing

slave." This shall apply if there are Muslims among the family of the murdered person. If none of his heirs is Muslim, then no blood money *(Diyah)* will be due.

If both the murderer and the murdered person are from a Muslim country, then the blood money *(Diyah)* as well as the freeing of a Muslim slave will be incumbent. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.1 14*]

"The one who cannot find a slave (as in our present day situation; or he cannot afford one, then he) *should fast for two consecutive months..."* These two months should not include the month of Ramadhān. This will substitute the Kaffāra, not the blood money *(Diyah)*.

The two months of fasting will be *"as a means of repentance as prescribed by Allāh."* Allāh shall forgive the one who fasts likewise with sincerity.

"Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise." Allāh is Aware of either party. No person should consider himself absolved if none is informed of his murder. Allāh shall punish him accordingly in the Hereafter. All His commands are replete with wisdom, be they the freeing of slaves, the blood money *(Diyah)*, etc.

Note: *"If he (the murdered person) be from a nation with whom you have a pact..."* In this part of the verse, the clause is not mentioned stating that the deceased is a Muslim. On account of this, certain jurists maintain that the extract refers to the murder of a "Dhimmi" or a "Mu'āhid" (a disbeliever *(kāfir)* visiting a Muslim country with the relevant visas). Imām Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has recorded in his book Ahkamul Qur'ān *(v.3 p.325)* that the above is the opinion of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه, Scholar *(Imām)* Sha'bi رحمة الله عليه, Imām Nakha'ī رحمة الله عليه, Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه and Imām Tabari رحمة الله عليه.

After mentioning this, he continues to narrate that this part of the verse refers to certain Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They contracted a pledge with him to the effect that they may be attacked if they do not accept Islām. This pledge was to last for a stipulated period wherein if any of them were killed, the blood money *(Diyah)* as well as the due expiation *(Kaffāra)* would be due from the murderer. However, this was annulled when Allāh revealed the first verse of Surah Bara'ah.

CERTAIN LAWS PERTAINING TO THE DIYAH

Ruling: The blood money *(Diyah)* in unintentional murder *(Qatl khat'a)* is a hundred camels for every life. These camels should constitute of 20 two-year old female camels, 20 three-year old female camels, 20 two-year old male camels, 20 four-year old female camels and 20 five-year old female camels. This has been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه.

Ruling: If a person chooses not to pay in camels, he may pay a thousand Dinārs (gold coins) or ten thousand Dirhams (silver coins).

Ruling: According to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, the blood money *(Diyah)* may only be paid in camels, gold and silver. However, according to Imām Abu Yusuf رحمة الله عليه and Imām Muhammad رحمة الله عليه, a hundred cows, a thousand goats or two hundred sets of clothing may also be paid. This has been stipulated by Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه.

Ruling: The blood money *(Diyah)* for a woman will be half of that for a man.

Ruling: The blood money *(Diyah)* for a Dhimmi is equal to that of a Muslim.

Ruling: The blood money *(Diyah)* will be distributed among the heirs according to their shares. If all the heirs waive the blood money *(Diyah)*, the entire amount will be remitted. If only some of them forgo their shares, only theirs will be waived.

Ruling: If the murdered person has no heirs, the blood money *(Diyah)* will be placed into the public treasury ("Baitul Māl").

Ruling: Although the due expiation *(Kaffāra)* (freeing the slave or fasting) will have to be paid by the murderer himself, the blood money *(Diyah)* will be paid by his "Āqila" i.e. those with whom he lives and associates, and who usually assist him. If they do not exist, then his family or tribe will become the Āqila. According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, the blood money *(Diyah)* is to be paid by the tribe or clan of the murderer. The details of this can be found in the books of jurisprudence.

The question may arise as to why should so many people be held responsible to pay the blood money *(Diyah)* when it was only one person who committed the murder? The first and foremost answer is that the Ahādīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stipulates this. Another reply is that a person who exercises such heedlessness to kill another does so due to his reliance upon those from whom he is assured support. They are also burdened with the payment because it was their duty to ensure that their members do not exercise such negligence due to which the life of a person was lost. If they were vigilant in the matter, the incidences of such murders will be drastically reduced. They are also held responsible because of their carelessness in overseeing the activities of their people.

Ruling: The Āqila will be permitted to pay the blood money *(Diyah)* over a period of three years. If they cannot afford to pay, the tribe or family closest to them will have to assist. The murderer will also be included among the Āqila and he will have to pay as one of them. Details can be had from the books of jurisprudence.

OTHER TYPES OF MURDER

Ruling: Besides the aforementioned types of murder, there are the "Amad" (intentional) and "Shibh Amad" (similar to intentional) types as well. The amad type will, Insha Allāh, be discussed later in the subsequent verses. Shibh Amad is that type of murder in which the intention was to kill, but the weapon used was not one usually used to kill e.g. a stick or whip. The penalty for this type of murder is just as in the case of Khat'a *(unintentional murder)*. The only difference will be in the constitution of the camels. Instead of five categories of camels there will only be four. i.e. 25 two-year old female camels, 25 three-year old female camels, 25 four-year old female camels and 25 five-year old female camels. This is according to Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه, as a verduct from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه.

Ruling: A male or female slave may be emancipated as due expiation *(Kaffāra)* since the word "raqaba" used in the verse refers to both of these. However, it is necessary that they be Muslim.

Ruling: If a person was forced to fast due to his inability to find a slave, the two months of fasting should be consecutive without a break in between. If, due to illness, he was compelled to miss a fast in between, the two months will have to renewed. A woman, however, is permitted to miss the fasts because of her menstruation, after which she may continue where she left off.

CERTAIN OTHER TYPES OF MURDER

The jurists have further classified murder into two other types. The first is termed *"Ma Ujriya Majral Khat'a" ("that which is in the same order as Khat'a")*. An example of this is where a sleeping person rolls and falls on another, killing him thereby. Due expiation *(Kaffāra)* and blood money *(Diyah)* are both due from him.

The other type is termed "Qatl Bis Sabab" ("murder due to an exterior factor"). An example of this is where a person digs a pit or places a boulder upon the land of another. Thereafter, this pit or boulder causes the death of someone. In this case, the blood money *(Diyah)* will be due from the Āqila, but there will be no due expiation *(Kaffāra)*.

Ruling: If a pregnant woman was struck in the belly causing the death of the unborn child, a slave or five hundred Dirhams (*silver coins*) will be due from the aggressor. This is referred to as "Ghurra" in the Shari'ah. If the child was aborted thereby and died only afterwards, a complete blood money *(Diyah)* will be due. If the child was killed instantly and then the mother also died, a complete blood money *(Diyah)* will be due for the mother and a Ghurra for the child.

If the child was still alive when aborted but died later, after which the mother also lost her life, then two complete bloods money *(Diyah)* will be due for each of them. Whatever becomes due because of the miscarriage will be distributed among the heirs of the child.

Ruling: It is the responsibility of every rider to ensure that he rides his animal without harming anyone. He will be liable for any harm caused to another who was trampled upon by the animal, bitten by it or with whom the animal collided.

Ruling: If both the riders of two horses were killed when they collided, the Āqila of each will have to reimburse the opposite party.

Lesson: Qisās and blood money *(Diyah)* have been ordained by the Shari'ah to safeguard the lives of people. Failure to implement them will only cause the loss of innocent lives. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"The one who does not judge by that which Allāh revealed, then those are the unjust ones indeed"* [*Surah 5, verse 45*]

All those people who allege that the laws of Islām are barbaric and unjust are disbelievers *(kuffār)* even though they may claim to be Muslims. In the absence of the laws of Shari'ah, aggressors think nothing of taking the lives of others. Even if they are arrested, their cases never reach the courts because of bribery. Should they reach the court, lawyers will make every attempt and seek

every loophole to acquit them. If they are ever convicted, their sentences are repealed or lightened. Then too these sentences are served in prisons, not benefiting the heirs of the deceased in any way.

This state of affairs has jeopardised public safety and murderers roam the streets freely. The vast majority of these criminals never see the courtroom and those who are sentenced appeal for amnesty, often gaining it. Even if they are refused at first, they are freed in the celebrations of a new government.

People think (*Allāh forbid*) that the present day legislation is sufficient for them and they need not resort to the Islāmic form of penal codes. Allāh responds to their misconception by declaring that *"Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise."* Accordingly, He passes laws and whoever objects to these are, in reality, objecting to Him!

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُۥ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُۥ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

(93) Whoever intentionally murders a believer, his retribution shall be Hell where he shall abide forever; Allāh shall be angry with him, curse him and prepare for him a dreadful punishment.

THE GRAVE SIN OF MURDERING A MUSLIM

After making mention of the erroneous killing, Allāh now speaks of the consequences in the Hereafter of deliberate murder. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The destruction of the entire universe is less significant to Allāh than the murder of single believer." [*Mishkāt p.300*]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira and Abu Sa'īd رضى الله عنه both narrate that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth were to collectively murder a single believer, Allāh would cast them all headlong into the fire of Hell." [*Thid*]

Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is a possibility that Allāh may forgive any sin except the one who commits polytheism *(shirk)* till his death and the one who murdered a believer *(Mu'min)*. Allāh shall never forgive them." [*Mishkāt p. 301*]

Despite these severe warnings, Muslims all over the world do murder each other for petty tribal, lingual and national reasons. These people drag with them to their graves the grievous sin of spilling the blood of their Muslim brother. The resultant consequences will be severe indeed since the fire of Hell is no small affair. They needlessly destroy their unity and give strength to the enemies of Islām by succumbing to their instigation of war.

Islām united the warring factions of the Aws and Khazraj tribes of Madinah, who buried the century old hatchet when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived in their city. Once when they were incited by some Jews to do battle, Prophet صلى

صلى الله عليه وسلم calmed them down and Allāh revealed the verse, *"Hold fast to the rope of Allāh collectively and do not be separated. Recall the bounty of Allāh upon you when you were enemies and Allāh forged the bond of love between your hearts so that you became brothers by His grace. You were upon the brink of an abyss of the Fire and Allāh rescued you therefrom."* [*Surah 2, verse 103*]. This verse was discussed in Surah Baqarah.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* will never be satisfied with Muslim unity and will always persist in their attempts to place the Muslims at loggerheads with each other. Like sheep, the Muslims destroy their lives in the Hereafter by killing other Muslims merely because they are not of their inclinations.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emphatically stated on the tenth of Dhul Hijjah upon the occasion of the farewell Hajj, "Do not turn apostate after me and do not sever the necks of each other." [*Bukhari v.2 p.1048*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned, "He who lifts a weapon against us is not from us." [*Bukhari v.2 p. 1047*]

In another hadith, he mentioned, "None of you should even point a weapon at his brother. Perchance Devil *(Shaytān)* may snatch it from his hand (thereby killing the other) and he will then sink to the depths of Hell." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I swear by The Being in whose hands is my life! That the day will certainly arrive before the Day of Judgment wherein the murderer will not know why he had murdered and the victim will also not know why he had been killed." When someone asked the reason for this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "This will be due to rampant strife and anarchy. Both the murderer and the murdered will be in the fire of Hell!" [*Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه reports that when two Muslims draw swords to fight each other, both shall end up in Hell. Someone enquired from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that this could be understood with regard to the one who killed his adversary, but what about the one who is killed? The reply was that he also intended to kill the other. He will enter Hell on account of his evil intention. [*Bukhari v.2 p. 1049*]

Lesson: The consensus of the Ahlus Sunnah maintain that the Muslim who murders another will eventually be forgiven by Allāh after having to suffer the punishment of Hell, as is the case with all other sins. However, the famous opinion of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه is that he will never be forgiven. The opposite has also been reported from him as reported by Allāma Baydawi رحمة الله عليه. Commentators mention that this may refer to those who consider murder to be permissible, in which case they will be disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

Ruling: The right to waive the Qisās lies with the heirs of the deceased. No ruler or magistrate can overrule this right.

Ruling: The person who murders one from whom he was due to inherit, shall be deprived of the inheritance. This is due to the possibility that he murdered him in order to receive the inheritance prematurely.

Ruling: The above rule will also apply in Shibh Amad.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُواْ وَلَا تَقُولُواْ لِمَنْ أَلْقَىٰٓ
إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَٰمَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَعِندَ ٱللَّهِ
مَغَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَٰلِكَ كُنتُم مِّن قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓاْ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾

(94) O you who believe! When you travel in Allāh's way then verify and do not tell the one who makes his submission apparent that "You are not a believer!" (thereby) seeking the gains of the worldly life. With Allāh lies tremendous spoils. You were the same before, until Allāh bestowed His grace upon you; so verify.' Indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do.

DO NOT TELL ANY PERSON WHO CLAIMS TO BE A MUSLIM THAT HE IS NOT A BELIEVER

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v.2 p.199*) records a narration of Bukhari (*v.2 p.606*), Nasa'ī and others in which Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that a group of Muslims once encountered a person who was travelling with all his wealth. He greeted them with salām, but they killed him and took possession of his wealth. The above verse was revealed with reference to this incident.

Another incident has also been narrated by Tirmidhi and others from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that a person from the tribe of Bani Sulaim once met a group of Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم while he was grazing his goats. He greeted them with salām, whereupon some of them argued that the greeting was merely to secure himself from them (he was not a Muslim but merely greeted them so that they may not harm him, thinking that he is a Muslim). When they killed him and brought his goats to Madinah, the above verse was revealed.

The verse warns Muslims not to be drastic in their actions when someone displays his Islām in any way, be it by way of greeting with Salām, reciting the Kalimah, etc. such a person's claims should not be rejected without investigating the matter. Since the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم in the above incidents took the person's possessions, Allāh says further, "....*(thereby) seeking the gains of the worldly life. With Allāh lies tremendous spoils.*"

Allāh then draws attention to the fact that at one stage even those (Muslims) who are careless not to accept the word of another person were in the same boat as he is in. Allāh says, *"You were the same before, till Allāh bestowed His grace upon you (by inspiring you to accept Islām, thereby securing your lives in both the worlds)."*

This verse makes it clear that a person's claim to Islām should be accepted at face value, since true belief lies within the heart and no human can perceive what is there. A person is obliged to accept what he can easily deduce from the exterior.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned, "I have been commanded to fight people till they testify *'Lā Ilāha Illallāhu Muhammadur Rasūlullāh,'* and they

establish Salāh and give Zakāh. Once they do this, they have secured their lives and their property from me, unless they need to be executed on account of an Islāmic penalty (like Qisās). This is a different case, and their reckoning rests with Allāh." [*Mishkāt p. 12*]

Muslims should accept others to be Muslims when they claim to be such. What their hearts conceal shall be judged by Allāh. Allāh shall give them their due retribution.

Lesson: Allāh repeats the instruction to verify by asserting, *"so verify!"* In this second instance, no mention is made of journeying, as in the first instance. This teaches the Muslim that verification should be given priority while on journey as well as when at home. The events leading to every cause of action must be authenticated. Nothing must be done on mere assumptions. This is especially necessary where the lives and property of people are concerned.

Islām is a Dīn *(religion)* of peace and security. No injustice should be allowed to be perpetrated on the grounds of mere allegations and suspicions.

Lesson: It is necessary to expose the disbelief *(kufr)* of those whose beliefs exude disbelief *(kufr)* even though they claim to be Muslims. Such is the case with those who refute the finality of Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and those who say that the penal code of Islām is unjust. The same will apply to those who deny the status of the Ahādīth in Islāmic law and those who claim that the Qur'ān was adulterated.

The common belief among people that every person cannot be termed a disbeliever refers to those whose claim to Islām is not tainted by any shadows of disbelief (*kufr*). It is a gross misconception that every person who faces the Qibla should be considered a Muslim. The statement of the jurists in this regard (that no person facing our Qibla may be said to be a disbeliever *(kāfir)*) has been adequately explained by Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله علیه in the commentary of "Fiqhul Akbar". He says that this statement means that no such person be classified a disbeliever *(kāfir)* as long as there are no signs and indications of disbelief *(kufr)* apparent in his beliefs and actions.

Lesson: No person may be termed a disbeliever *(kāfir)*by committing any sin as long as he does not consider the sin to be lawful. He will be called a disbeliever *(kāfir)* if he considers sin to be lawful or rejects the obligatory nature of any of the obligations *(Farāidh)*.

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم mentioned that the demands of Belief *(Imān)* are three. The first is to restrain the hand and the tongue from any person who claims to be a Muslim. The second is not to term him a disbeliever *(kāfir)* on account of any sin. The third is that Jihād *(religion war)* will remain from the time Allāh sent him [the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم till the time when the surviving members of his Ummah fight Dajjāl. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم added that Jihād *(religion war)* will not be terminated by the oppression of any tyrant, nor by the justice of any just person. Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم stated further that belief in Taqdīr (predestination) was also a requisite of Imān. [*Abu Dawūd*]

لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُو۟لِى ٱلضَّرَرِ وَٱلْمُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۚ وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَفَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾ دَرَجَٰتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾

(95) The believers who sit back without excuse cannot be equal to those who strive in Allāh's way with their wealth and lives. Allāh has immensely elevated the stages of those who strive in His way with their wealth and lives over those who sit back. Allāh has promised bliss for each of them, and Allāh has preferred those who strive over those who sit back by conferring on them a tremendous reward. (96) (in the form of) lofty stages by Him, forgiveness and mercy. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful

THE MUJĀHIDĪN AND THE PASSIVE ONES CANNOT BE EQUATED

As was understood by the above hadith, the need for Jihād *(religion war)* will remain until the last people of the Ummah fight Dajjāl. This must be fought with one's wealth and life for the sole purpose of elevating the Dīn *(religion)* of Allāh.

Allāh begins by declaring that *"The believers who sit back without excuse cannot be equal to those who strive in Allāh 's way with their wealth and lives."* A person who exerts himself to elevate the Dīn *(religion)* in whichever way possible shall always be superior than those who do nothing for the Dīn *(religion)*.

"Allāh has immensely elevated the stages of those who strive in His way with their wealth and lives over those who sit back." From the Arabic context, it is understood that their elevated stages are such that others can never reach them. [*Rūhul Ma'āni*]

While the opening part of the verse stated that the rank of the Mujāhidīn is superior to those who are inactive, this part emphasises to them that the inactive ones should not think that they are only secondary in status to the Mujāhidīn, but that they are also depriving themselves of a vastly superior standing in Allāh's sight. Of course, those who have a legitimate reason for not participating are excused.

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم dictated to Sayyidina Zaid bin Thābit رضی الله عنه the verse, *"The believers who sit back cannot be equal to those who strive in Allāh 's way with their wealth and lives."* Thereupon Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Ummi Maktūm رضی الله عنه (a blind Sahabi) asked, "How may I attain the privilege when I have been deprived of sight?" Allāh then revealed the exception of *"without excuse."* The verse thus read, *"The believers who sit back without excuse cannot be equal to those who strive in Allāh 's way with their wealth and lives."*

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضی الله عنه narrates (*Bukhari v.2 p.660/1*) that this verse referred to those who did not participate in the battle of Badr. There was no general conscription for the battle of Badr, therefore those who did not

participate were not sinful. They, however, could not hope to achieve an equal footing with those who did participate. The verse holds true for every period of time and the statement of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه merely indicates that the verse was revealed on that particular occasion of Badr.

"Allāh has promised bliss for each of them..." Both the Mujāhidīn and those who fail to participate in Jihād *(religion war)* have been promised entry into Heaven *(Jannah)* [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" from Sayyidina Qatādah* رحمة الله عليه]. This is so because each of these two groups possesses the qualifying factors of Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds. However, the difference will be in their stages of Heaven *(Jannah)*. The person who desists from participation when Jihād *(religion war)* is obligatory *(Fardh)* will be considered a sinner.

Thereafter Allāh continues to emphasise the superiority of the Mujāhidīn by saying, *"and Allāh has preferred those who strive over those who sit back by conferring on them a tremendous reward (in the form of) lofty stages by Him, forgiveness and mercy. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Lesson: *"Allāh has promised bliss for each of them..."* It is evident from this part of the verse that it will be wrong to jeer at those who (being engaged in their devotional acts) do not participate in Jihād *(religion war)* when it is not obligatory *(Fardh)*. This will apply especially to those who are involved in some sort of service to the Dīn *(religion)*. Those engaged in learning and teaching the Dīn *(religion)* are also striving towards elevating and propagating Islām, seeking only Allāh's pleasure. Such people will also receive rewards from Allāh.

In a similar manner if those possessing some sort of excuse also have the intention to strive in Allāh's cause if they were able to, then they too will receive a similar reward.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that when they were returning from the Tabūk expedition, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "Without doubt there are many people whom we have left behind in Madinah. They were with us (sharing in the reward) in every valley and pass that we crossed. They were withheld on account of some disability." [*Bukhari v.2 p.637*]

Of those who are excused from participating in Jihād *(religion war)* there are some who are undeterred. They possess such an aspiration and desire to fight that although they cannot actually fight, they attempt to serve in other ways. The Sahabi رضى الله عنه in the Hadith viz. Sayyidina Ibn Ummi Maktūm رضى الله عنه participated in many battles holding the banner of Islām aloft. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.124*].

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾ إِلَّا ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾

(97) Indeed those the lives of whom the angels seize while they are oppressors to themselves saying to them, "What was your condition?" They reply, "We were harassed on earth." They (the angels) say, "Was Allāh's land not vast enough that you could have emigrated therein?" The abode of such folk is Hell, and it is the worst of destinations. (98) Except for those harassed men, women and children who were unable to devise a plan and do not know the road. (99) These are the ones for whom it is hoped that Allāh forgives them. Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Forgiving.

A WARNING AGAINST LIVING AMONGST THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

A narration appears in Bukhari (*v.2 p.661*) in which Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that there were some people who accepted Islām but who did not migrate to Madinah. They remained among the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* and increased their numbers (by being in their ranks at times of war). As a result they were also killed in combat. The above verse was revealed with regard to them.

"Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.79*) records that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated to Madinah, some Muslims were reluctant to join him due to fear for their wealth and lives. Allāh revealed the above verses with regard to these people.

The verse expresses resentment for those people who do not migrate despite the ability to do so. They prefer to live with the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, not being concerned with their Dīn *(religion)* welfare. The verse informs us that when the angels of death present themselves before these people who have oppressed themselves, they question them, *"What was your condition?' They reply, 'We were harassed on earth."* In other words they express regret that they were unable to fully accomplish the necessary requisites of Dīn *(religion)* because their disbelievers *(kuffār)* masters did not allow them to. The angels will tell them, *"Was Allāh 's land not vast enough that you could have emigrated therein?"*

In the initial stages of Islām, Hijrah was obligatory *(Fardh)*. People either failed to migrate because they were Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*, or because they were simply neglectful of the obligations *(Farā'idh)*, either party was therefore deserving of punishment. Hijrah was no easy task since it entailed leaving behind all of one's wealth, property and possessions, never to return ever again. They only took their families along if the opportunity permitted, otherwise they were to be left behind as well. Added to this was the fact that the disbelievers did not permit their safe passage.

It was for these reasons that the books of history depict the agonising migrations of so many Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم. First came the migration to Abysinnia and then to Madinah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his closest friend, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, left for Madinah without their families. The beloved daughter of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidah Zaynab رضى الله عنها was compelled to remain in Makkah and when she was finally able to migrate, a disbeliever flung a spear at her, causing her foetus miscarriage.

When Sayyidah Abu Salamah رضى الله عنها and his wife Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها intended to leave for Madinah with their son Salamah رضى الله

عنها, the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* prevented them. The family of Sayyidina Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها took her into their custody while the family of Abu Salma رضى الله عنه seized possession of the child. In this way, the family was wrenched apart.

Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها narrates that for a long she would weep the entire day from morning to night. Eventually someone convinced her family to permit her to join her family. When the family of Abu Salma رضى الله عنه released her son into her custody, she set off for Madinah all alone.

She narrates that when she reached Tan'īm, she met Sayyidina Uthmān bin Talha رضى الله عنه who asked her where she was headed. When she replied that she was going to Madinah to meet her husband, he enquired who was with her. She replied that there was none besides her child and Allāh. On hearing this, he took hold of her camel and led it to Madinah. [*Al Isaba*]

Another incident has already being mentioned concerning Sayyidina Suhaib Rumi رضى الله عنه under the discussion of the verse, *"From the people there are those who sell themselves seeking Allāh 's pleasure."* [*Surah Baqarah, verse 207*]

The compulsion to migrate to Madinah was later abrogated and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم announced, "There shall be no Hijrah after the conquest of Makkah." However, if the necessity arises for the protection of one's Dīn *(religion)*, a person will be obliged to migrate. Even in today's times if a country undergoes a revolution and Muslims are compelled to migrate, they will have to comply. If, despite the ability, they fail to do so because of love for their material possessions (and they are not permitted to practice Islām as they should), they will be sinful. Hijrah will be Fardh for them and if they do not migrate they will be interrogated by the angels of death who will ask them, *"Was Allāh 's land not vast enough that you could have emigrated therein?"*

Such a situation arose in Eastern Punjab in the year 1366 A.H. and is still taking place in many parts of Europe and Africa. Those who respond to the call to migrate and take courage shall find that Allāh will definitely facilitate the means for them, as He says in the following verse, *"They will find in the land an abundance of pastures and vastness."* [*verse 100*]

THOSE LIVING IN EUROPE AND AMERICA SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR BELIEF *(IMĀN)*

Nowadays, many people have reversed the order of things. They leave havens where their Dīn *(religion)* of Islām is secure and, for worldly gains, opt to live in the dens of vice and immorality, viz, the Western countries. They are then robbed of their Dīn *(religion)* and cause the same to be lost to generations after them. They weaken in their faith and thereafter their children supersede them in irreligiousness.

"Except for those harassed men, women and children who were unable to devise a plan and do not know the road." Such people are excluded from entry into Hell. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that he and his mother were of this group [*Bukhari p.660*]. Besides him there were other Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم also who were included in this group. They were constrained to live under the persecution of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would

make prayer *(du'ā)* for them in the "Qunūt Nāzila" which he used to recite in the Salāh.

"These are the ones for whom it is hoped that Allāh forgives them. Allāh is Most Pardoning, Most Forgiving." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.127*) writes that even when a person is unable to make Hijrah, failing to do it will be considered as a type of sin. This is so because the above portion of the verse speaks of forgiveness for these people (who were unable to migrate), and forgiveness follows a sin. Therefore, the person who cannot migrate should continuously seek the opportunity to do so.

۞ وَمَن يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ مُرَٰغَمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً ۚ وَمَن يَخْرُجْ مِنۢ بَيْتِهِۦ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ ٱلْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

(100) He who migrates in Allāh 's way shall find in the land an abundance of pastures and vastness. Whoever will leave his home migrating towards Allāh and His messenger, and is then overtaken by death, most assuredly his reward is assured by Allāh. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE PROMISES FOR THOSE WHO MIGRATE IN THE WAY OF ALLĀH

It is narrated in "Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.79*) from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that when Sayyidina Dhamra bin Jundub رضى الله عنه intended to migrate, he instructed his family to mount him on his conveyance and remove him from the land of the idolaters since he desired to reach the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. En route he passed away and was thus unable to meet Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. On this occasion the above verse was revealed.

Another incident is reported concerning Sayyidina Abu Dhamra Zuraqi رضى الله عنه who was unable to migrate from Makkah. When the verse *"Except for those harassed men, women and children who were unable to devise a plan and do not know the road,"* (*Surah Nisā, verse 98*) was revealed, he resolved to migrate since he was wealthy and able to *"devise a plan"*. However, he met his end while on the road to Madinah at Tan'īm. Upon this the verse was revealed viz. *"Whoever will leave his home migrating towards Allāh and His messenger, and is then overtaken by death, most assuredly his reward is assured by Allāh. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Yet another report is recorded with regard to Sayyidina Khālid bin Harām رضى الله عنه. He was killed by snakebite while migrating from Abysinnia to Madinah. "Lubābun Nuqūl" narrates another report concerning Sayyidina Aktham bin Sayfi رضى الله عنه. A verse may have various circumstances of revelation and they do not contradict each other since the intent of the verse is general.

The verse emphasises that the person who migrates for the pleasure of Allāh shall gain the object of his quest even though he is unable to realise his physical

objective because of death.

The literal meaning of the Arabic word 'Hijrah' is 'to leave' or 'to forsake'. According to the Shari'ah, it refers to leaving one's native town or country for the purpose of practising one's Dīn *(religion)*. Hijrah will be made whether the person leaves of his own accord or whether the disbelievers *(kuffār)* force him to leave.

THE REWARDS OF HIJRAH

Because Hijrah entails great hardship and sacrifice, many rewards have been promised for it. Allāh says in one of the concluding verses of Surah Āl Imrān, *"So those who migrate, are exiled from their homes, suffer in the path of Allāh, fight and are martyred, I shall definitely remit their sins from them and enter them into such gardens beneath which rivers flow. Such is the reward from Allāh. With Allāh are the best of rewards."* [*Surah 3, verse 195*]

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"indeed those who believe, migrate and strive in Allāh's way, they are the ones who aspire for Allāh's mercy, and Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* [*Surah 2, verse 218*]

Allāh declares in Surah Taubah, *"Verily those who believe, migrate and strive in Allāh's way with their wealth and their lives ascend to the highest positions by Allāh. These are the successful ones."* [*Surah 9, verse 20*]

A verse in Surah Nahl reads, *"Those who migrate for Allāh after they have been oppressed, We shall surely grant them the best of sanctuaries in this world, and the rewards of the Hereafter are the greatest if they but knew."* [*Surah 16, verse 41*]

It is learnt from these verses that those who migrate for the sake of Allāh will definitely find a more suitable haven and Allāh shall also bless them with wealth. Although they may have hardships initially because of their strange surroundings, the doors of Allāh mercy and blessings will soon be flung wide open for them.

The Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم migrated penniless from Makkah, but it was not long before Makkah itself and then numerous other places fell to the hands of the Muslims. Large tracts of land and invaluable property became theirs once the Muslim conquests forged ahead.

History bears testimony to the fact that Hijrah and Jihād *(religion war)* are revolutionary factors. Not only are the Muslims thereby guaranteed the bliss of the Hereafter (which is incomparable to even the best of this world), but they also received the abundance of this world as well.

THE ACTUAL HIJRAH IS TO ABSTAIN FROM SIN

Hijrah does not merely entail leaving one's home and hearth. The actual objective is to be free to practise upon one's Dīn *(religion)* without the constraints of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. The underlying purpose is to facilitate abstention from sins and obedience to the injunctions of Allāh.

Bukhari (*v.1 p.6*) reports the hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The true Muhājir *(emigrant)* is he who abstains from the things that Allāh

has forbidden."

Another narration reports that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The true Muhājir *(emigrant)* is he who abstains from sin and misdeeds." [*Mishkāt p. 15*]

Sayyidina Amr bin Abasa رضى الله عنه once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which Hijrah was the best, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "That you leave whatever displeases your Lord." [*Mishkāt p. 16*]

The abject situation prevailing today is that when people migrate, they do not fulfill this purpose of abstaining from sin; instead they become more sinful and often forfeit their previous lives of religiousness. They neglect Salāh, do not pay Zakāh, detest veil *(Hijāb)* and even adopt the Western laws that lead them to live in sin with women whom they have divorced irrevocably. Rebellion, anarchy and confrontation become their mode of life and they ceaselessly blurt words of disbelief (*kufr*). Despite all of the above, they still refer to themselves as emigrants *(Muhājirīn)*.

It is binding upon Muslims to assist those who migrate. This was exemplified by the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم who occupied Madinah. They whole-heartedly welcomed their migrating emigrants *(Muhājirīn)* brothers from Makkah, extending every helping hand to make them as comfortable as was humanly possible. It was for this reason that they were called the Ansār (helpers).

Allāh says in Surah Hashr, *"Those who adopted the sanctuary (of Islām) and. Belief (Imān) from before, (they) love those who migrate towards them and they do not find in their hearts any grudge on account of what they were given. They give preference (to others) above themselves even though they be starving. Those are indeed successful who safeguard themselves from selfishness."* [*Surah 59,verse 9*]

The world has not again seen the likes of the Ansār of Madinah. Today there exists only emigrants *(Muhājirīn)* and no Ansār. The reason for this is that people no longer understand the essence of Dīn *(religion)*. Instead of realising that these immigrants have arrived for the protection of their Dīn *(religion)*, they consider them to be a burden and parasites who will steal their share of the pie.

Another reason for this is that many immigrants themselves are plunged into sin and vice. They are the ardent followers of the enemies of Islām and consider their Muslim hosts to be enemies. They plunder and steal without recourse, harming everyone in their wake. How can they them expect hospitality? Assistance is rendered on the grounds of religiousness and will not be found when their objectives are only centred around the world and its acquisition.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Abstain from the world and Allāh will love you. Abstain from what people have and they will love you." [*Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah*]

Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه has said, "If you abstain from the world, you will be at peace with its people. If you pull it towards yourself, its dogs will maul you."

Many who were exiled from their countries were people of low moral and religious standing; as a result the people of their host countries have little regard

for them.

Bukhari reports a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Actions are according to their intentions and every person will achieve that which he intended. Whoever migrated towards Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, shall receive the reward of migrating towards Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Whoever migrated to attain the world or to marry a woman, then he shall have that for which he migrated."

This hadith is well documented in almost all the books of hadith and referred to a person who migrated to marry a woman called Ummul Qais. He was thus termed "Muhājir Ummul Qais" (i.e. "the man who migrated for Ummul Qais").

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَوٰةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَن يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا (101)

(101) When you travel in the land, there is no sin on you that you abridge your Salāh if you fear an attack from the disbelievers (kuffār). Indeed the disbelievers (kuffār) are your open enemies.

DISCUSSION OF "QASR" SALĀH

Because both Hijrah and Jihād *(religion war)* involve travel, Allāh now opens the discussion on Salāh while travelling. Muslim have always been performing their Salāh as Qasr (in a shortened form) when on journey. It applies only to those Salāh that consist of four rakāhs i.e. Zuhr, Asr and Isha, all of which are reduced to two rakāhs each. Fajr and Maghrib remain as they are.

If a traveller *(Musāfir)* performs his Salāh behind a Scholar *(Imām)* who is not on journey, then he will follow the Scholar *(Imām)* in reading the complete four rakāhs. If the Scholar *(Imām)* is a travellar *(Musāfir)* and the follower is a resident *(not on journey) (Muqīm)*, then when the Scholar *(Imām)* completes his Salāh after two rakāhs, the follower will stand up to complete the remaining two rakāhs.

A person will be considered to be a traveller *(Musāfir)* when he embarks on a journey of 48 Shari miles (equivalent to 88.86 km.). He will now perform the Shorten *(Qasr)* Salāh once he passes the boundaries of his town. Once he stops at a place with the intention to stay for 15 days or more, he will cease to be a traveller *(Musāfir)* and will have to perform the Salāh in full. As long as he does not make this intention (to stay for 15 or more days), he will continue to perform shorten *(Qasr)* indefinitely.

PERFORMING THE NON-OBLIGATORY SALĀH WHILE ON JOURNEY

The non-obligatory Salāh (including the Sunnah Salāh) will not be shortened on journey. However, if a person is in haste he may omit them

altogether. The Witr Salāh (after Isha) may not be omitted and the two Sunnah rakāhs of Fajr should also not be missed.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that he performed two rakāhs of Zuhr with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on journey and thereafter a further two rakāhs. Then they performed two rakāhs of Asr, whereafter no additional rakāhs were performed. He adds that he also performed Maghrib with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while on journey as well as when not on journey. In both cases there was no deduction in the number of rakāhs. He then added, "This (*Maghrib Salāh*) is the Witr (*odd numbered*) Salāh of the day whereafter two rakāhs are performed." [*Tirmidhi p.105*]

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضى الله عنه narrates that he once travelled with Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for 18 days. He says that he never saw the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم omit any two rakāhs after midday. This tells us that one may perform the Sunnah and non-obligatory Salāh while on journey.

CAN A PERSON PERFORM THE COMPLETE FOUR RAKĀHS WHILE ON JOURNEY?

The verse states that a person may curtail his Salāh if He fears some harm from the enemy. Due to this Sayyidina Ya'la bin Umayya رحمة الله عليه asked Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, "Allāh says, '*there is no sin on you that you abridge your Salāh if you fear an attack from the disbelievers (kuffār).' Now that we have no fear from the enemy, should we not perform our Salāh in full?*"

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه told him that he was also perplexed with the same question and enquired the answer from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "This (concession) is a charity from Allāh to you, so accept Allāh's charity." [*Muslim v.1 p.241*]

The clause stipulated by Allāh in the verse (i.e. being on a journey) applied only in the initial stages of Islām whereafter it was cancelled. Now the only condition for shorten *(Qasr)* Salāh is that a person embarks on a journey of more than 88.86 km.

Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was on journey from Makkah to Madinah, he feared none besides Allāh, yet he performed the Salāh in twos." [*Majma'uz Zawā'id v.2 p.156*]

Sayyidina Hāritha bin Wahab رضى الله عنه reports that he performed two rakāhs Salāh with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Mina when conditions were absolutely safe. [*Muslim v.2 p.243*]

Because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded that Muslims accept the charity of Allāh, Imām Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه states that Shorter *(Qasr)* Salāh is Wājib *(compulsory)* while on journey.

It will be inappropriate for a traveller *(Musāfir)* to perform four rakāhs instead of the two of Shorter *(Qasr)*. His Salāh will be considered complete once he completes the first two rakāhs because only two are obligatory on him. Therefore, he would have completed his obligation *(Fardh)* upon reaching the Qa'dah *(sitting posture)* after two rakāhs. If he has to then complete four rakāhs without the Qa'dah *(sitting posture)* in between, the Salāh will be incomplete and

the Salāh will have to repeated. The Sajdah Sahw [*prostration while forgetting something (Fardh) obligation in Salāh*] will also not suffice since a obligation *(Fardh)* Qa'dah *(sitting posture)* has been omitted.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه narrates, "I travelled with the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and he never exceeded two rakāhs [in the obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh] till Allāh claimed his soul. Then I lived with Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه and he also never exceeded two rakāhs while on journey. Thereafter I lived with Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه who also never performed more than two rakāhs obligatory *(Fardh)* till Allāh raised his soul. I then lived with Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه who also never performed more then two rakāhs till Allāh eventually laid him to rest. Allāh says, *'Indeed in the messenger of Allāh there is a sterling example for you."* [*Muslim v.1 p.242*]

Muslim (*v.1 p.243*) narrates that Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه began performing four rakāhs Salāh towards the end of his Caliphate *(Khilāfah)*. However, as was reported from him, there were reasons for this.

Sayyidina Abdur Rahman bin Abi Dhubāb رحمة الله علیه reports that Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه performed four rakāhs at Mina whereupon people were upset. Upon sensing the displeasure of the people he said, "I have made Makkah my home and I have heard the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم say that the person who adopts a place as his home should perform the Salāh of a Muqīm (resident) therein." [*Majma'uz Zawā'id v.2 p. 156*]

The fact that Sayyidina Uthmān رضی الله عنه had to explain his reason and that the people were surprised shows that the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم and the Tabi'īn رحمة الله علیه were of the opinion that a traveller *(Musāfir)* should always perform Shorten Salāh *(Qasr)*. If it were permissible to omit Shorten Salāh *(Qasr)*, the above scenario would not have occurred.

وَإِذَا كُنتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُم مَّعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوٓا۟
أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا۟ فَلْيَكُونُوا۟ مِن وَرَآئِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَآئِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ
يُصَلُّوا۟ فَلْيُصَلُّوا۟ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۗ وَدَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ
عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُم مَّيْلَةً وَٰحِدَةً ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن
كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِّن مَّطَرٍ أَوْ كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَن تَضَعُوٓا۟ أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ ۖ وَخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَكُمْ ۗ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا (102) فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا
وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا ٱطْمَأْنَنتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَٰبًا مَّوْقُوتًا (103)

(102) When you are with them and establish the Salāh, a group from them

should stand with you and take their weapons. Then when they have prostrated, they should fall behind you and the second group, who have not yet performed Salāh, should come forward and perform Salāh with you, taking precautions and their weapons. The disbelievers wish that you neglect your weapons and equipment so that they may launch a decisive attack against you. There is no sin upon you if you lay down your arms due to destructive rains or if you fall ill. Take your precautions! Indeed Allāh has prepared a humiliating punishment for the disbelievers. (103) When you have completed your Salāh, remember Allāh standing, sitting and (reclining) on your sides. When you are in safety, then establish Salāh. Indeed Salāh has been ordained on the believers at fixed hours.

THE METHOD AND LAWS OF "SALĀTUL KHAWF"

The above verse details the method of Salātul Khawf (the Salāh performed when in fear of an attack). Sayyidina Abu Ayāsh Zuraqi رضى الله عنه narrates that they were with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم at a place called Asfān. Before them was a detachment of the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* led by Sayyidina Khālid bin Walīd رضى الله عنه (who had not yet embraced Islām). They positioned themselves between the Muslims and the Qibla.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم in Zuhr Salāh, the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* chided themselves for not attacking the Muslims during Salāh when they would have been oblivious of the assault. They therefore resolved to attack during the Asr Salāh, which was pending, and which they knew was more beloved to the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم than their lives and their families. Before the Salāh of Asr, Jibr'īl عليه السلام brought the revelation of the above verse, detailing the Muslims as to how they were to perform their Salāh.

Different types of the Salātul Khawf have been explained by Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Dawūd رحمة الله عليه. The method outlined in the verse is that the army be divided into two groups. The one will remain engaged with the enemy, monitoring their movements, while the other will begin the Salāh behind the Scholar *(Imām)*. When this group have completed the two prostration *(Sajdahs)* of the first rakāh, they will switch roles with the other group.

The Scholar *(Imām)* will await the arrival of the arriving group and perform the remaining rakāh with them.

Once the Scholar *(Imām)* completes the Salāh by making the salāms, he would have terminated his Salāh of two rakāhs whereas each of the groups would have only performed one rakāh each. Now the group behind the Scholar *(Imām)* will return to the battle without joining the Scholar *(Imām)* in the salām. The first group will return to complete their remaining rakāh, whereafter they will allow the second group to complete theirs by switching roles again.

The above will apply when both the Scholar *(Imām)* and the followers are travellers *(Musāfirs)*. If the Scholar *(Imām)* is a resident *(Muqīm)*, each group should complete two rakāhs behind him since the Salāh will consist of four rakāhs. If this occurs during the Salāh of Maghrib then the first group will perform two rakāhs with the Scholar *(Imām)* and the second group will perform the other one. This is permissible because the situation is an emergency.

The description of the Salātul Khawf not only emphasises the importance of Salāh, but that of Salāh in congregation. Even when the enemy is before one, Salāh with congregation cannot be missed, let alone the Salāh itself. However, when the assault of the enemy is so intense that the army cannot congregate to perform their Salāh, then they will be permitted to perform their Salāh individually. If the situation is fraught with even greater danger, then they may perform their Salāh as the opportunity allows. This was discussed in Surah Baqarah where Allāh mentioned, *"If you fear then (perform Salāh) on foot or mounted."* [*Surah 2, verse 239*]

The Salāh may only be postponed and performed as Lapse *(Qadha)* when the above methods are impossible, as occurred to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم on the occasion of the battle of Ahzāb (the trench).

Ruling: It will be best to perform two separate Salāhs with two Scholar *(Imām)*. However, if the soldiers insist on following one Scholar *(Imām)*, they will have to resort to Salātul Khawf.

Ruling: If Salāh is performed during battle, then it may be nullified by excessive actions (Aml Kathīr). Much of this has been discussed in Surah Baqarah under the verse, *"If you fear then (perform Salāh) on foot or mounted."* [*Surah 2, verse 239*]

"......and take their weapons." This indicates that they should be prepared to defend themselves should the necessity arise. Although their Salāh will be thus rendered void, it can always be repeated later, but defence is imperative.

"There is no sin upon you if you lay down your arms due to destructive rains or you fall ill." This verse explains that the Muslims are allowed to lay down their weapons because of adverse weather conditions or illness. However, they should remain wary of the enemy and keep their weapons close at hand. In the meantime, others should be deployed in reconnaissance.

"When you have completed your Salāh, remember Allāh standing, sitting and (reclining) on your sides." Salāh is in itself a form of Allāh's remembrance as Allāh says in Surah TāHā, "Establish Salāh for My remembrance" [*Surah 20, verse 14*]. Salāh consists of verbal remembrance as well as remembrance of the heart. Dhikr *(remembrance of Allāh)* is the spirit and soul of every type of devotion. The Day of Judgment will dawn only when there exists none to remember Allāh. [*Muslim v.1 p.84*]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The gathering devoid of Allāh's remembrance and devoid of salutations to His messenger shall be a cause of harm to its participants. If Allāh wills, He may forgive them and if He wills he may punish them. The reclining of a person who does not remember Allāh shall be a cause of harm to him, as will be the walking of the person who does not remember Allāh while walking."

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is also reported to have said that the gathering in which Allāh is not remembered, or in which salutations are not sent to His messenger, shall be source of remorse and grief to its participants on the Day of Judgment. This will be so even though they will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* on

account of their rewards." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.409-110*]

Jihād *(religion war)*, as great an act of devotion as it may be, should also not be devoid of dhikr. Similarly no act should be devoid of Dhikr *(remembrance of Allāh)* since it adds great illumination every act. Dhikr *(remembrance of Allāh)* should be the constant companion of every Muslim.

Sayyidina Sahl bin Mu'ādh رضى الله عنه reports from his father that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Undoubtedly the reward of every action is multiplied seven hundred times in the path of Allāh, be it Salāh, fasting or dhikr *(remembrance of Allāh)*." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.2 p.267*]

"When you are in safety, establish Salāh." Commentators state that this part of the verse means that once a person returns from his journey (as the previous verse mentioned *"When you travel in the land"*), then he should now establish Salāh in full. Others maintain that it refers to the condition when one is not confronted by the enemy and does not have to perform the Salātul Khawf.

"Indeed Salāh has been ordained on the believers at fixed hours." Salāh should be performed at its appointed hours, whether one is on journey or at home, ill or healthy, in safety or in danger. Since the times of Salāh have been fixed, it will not be permissible to perform a Salāh before its time, nor is it permissible to read one Salāh during the time of another. It is a great sin to intentionally postpone a Salāh until after its time and perform it as Lapse *(Qadha)*. If the Salāh was omitted because of some legitimate cause (such as an enemy attack), then the Lapse *(Qadha)* must be observed.

On journey, certain Salāhs may be performed in a manner similar to combining them (Jama Sūri). This means that Zuhr may be performed at the last permissible time to be followed by Asr at its earliest time. Similarly Maghrib may be performed at its last time with Isha thereafter at its earliest time. Although it may seem to the onlooker that the two Salāhs were combined, but each was performed in their respective times.

Because of the emphasis in the verse that each Salāh has its fixed time, Scholar *(Imām)* Abu Hanīfa رحمة الله عليه maintains that no two Salāhs may be combined (so that one is performed during the time of another). The person who misses a Salāh should perform the qadha as soon as possible and then make excessive repentance *(Taubah)* and seek Allāh's forgiveness.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ٱبْتِغَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ إِن تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ
وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿104﴾

(104.) Do not weaken in your pursuit of the enemy. If you are suffering, then they too are suffering just as you suffer. (However) You entertain such hopes in Allāh as they do not. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise.

DO NOT RELENT IN PURSUING THE ENEMY

If the enemy is not pursued and chased, they will consider the Muslims to

be feeble and build courage to ceaselessly launch attacks against the Muslims. No weakness should be shown to the enemy. In combating the disbelievers *(kuffār),* Muslims are sure to suffer somewhat and incur injuries. Allāh offers them solace by reminding them *"If you are suffering, then they too are suffering just as you suffer."*

Although the Muslims and the disbelievers *(kuffār)* share the miseries and injuries of war, the Muslims have much to look forward to, as Allāh says, *"You entertain such hopes in Allāh as they do not."* While the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will be subjected to the unending torment and distress in the abysses of Hell, the Muslims shall be rejoicing in the bliss and comforts of Heaven *(Jannah),* without the slightest worries and concerns. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* cannot aspire for these stages as these are promised exclusively to the Muslims. For this reason the Muslims have a much stronger incentive to fight and should do so with greater zest and zeal.

"Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise." Allāh knows the requirements and actions of every individual and reveals His commandments with perfect wisdom. Total success lies in carrying out these commands.

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِمَآ أَرَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن
لِّلْخَآئِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿105﴾ وَٱسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿106﴾ وَلَا
تُجَٰدِلْ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿107﴾
يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ﴿108﴾ هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ جَٰدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَمَن يُجَٰدِلُ ٱللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَم مَّن يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَكِيلًا ﴿109﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ يَجِدِ ٱللَّهَ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿110﴾ وَمَن يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُۥ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿111﴾ وَمَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيٓـَٔةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِۦ بَرِيٓـًٔا فَقَدِ ٱحْتَمَلَ بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿112﴾ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَهَمَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُضِلُّوكَ
وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ وَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴿113﴾ ۞ لَّا
خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍۭ بَيْنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿114﴾ وَمَن

يُشَاقِقِ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١١٥﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿١١٦﴾

(105) Undoubtedly We have revealed to you the Book with the truth so that you may judge between people by that which Allāh has shown you. Do not be a solicitor for the treacherous ones...... (106) ...... and seek forgiveness from Allāh. Surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (107) Do not plead on behalf of those who deceive themselves. Verily Allāh does not like him who is deceitful and a sinner. (108) They try to hide from people while they cannot hide from Allāh Who is with them when they confer secretly at night regarding those talks that Allāh dislikes. Allāh is Ever Aware of what they perpetrate. (109) Be warned that these are the very ones in whose defence you plead in the worldly life. So who will plead their case on the Day of Judgment and who will be their lawyer? (110) Whosoever commits a sin or wrongs himself and then seeks Allāh 's forgiveness, he will surely find that Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (111) Whoever earns a sin earns it only to his detriment. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise. (112) Whoever commits a minor sin or a major sin, then casts the blame upon an innocent, he has indeed burdened himself with a great slander and manifest sin. (113) If it were not for the grace of Allāh upon you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and His mercy, a party of them had surely resolved to mislead you. They mislead none but themselves and they cannot harm you in the least. Allāh has revealed to you the Book and wisdom and taught you what you knew not. The grace of Allāh upon you has been tremendous indeed. (114) There is no good in most of their secret consultations except in him who enjoins charity, a good deed or reconciliation between the people. Whoever will do this seeking Allāh's pleasure, then We shall soon confer on him an immense reward. (115) Whoever opposes the messenger after the guidance has become manifest to him and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall allow him to do that which he is doing and then enter him into Hell. It is the worst of abodes. 116. Verily Allāh shall not forgive that partners be ascribed to Him, but will forgive all other sins for whom He wills. Whosoever ascribes partners to Allāh has wandered far astray.

THE THEFT OF A HYPOCRITE AND WARNINGS AGAINST DEFENDING HIM

Imām Tirmidhi رحمة الله عليه reports the following incident from Sayyidina Qatādah bin Nu'mān رضى الله عنه. He narrates that there were three brothers in his clan by the names of Bishr, Bushair and Mubasshir. They were referred to as the Bani Ubayrīq. Bushair was a hypocrite and used to write poetry ridiculing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم, which he used to attribute to others. The Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم knew that these were composed by him and that he would falsely claim that it was the work of the Bani Ubayrīq.

The Bani Ubayrīq lived in poverty both during the period of ignorance as

well as during the days of Islām. During those days, the people of Madinah lived on dates and barley. It was only when the tradesmen of Syria sold to them wheat flour that the affluent people bought some for themselves, while others contented themselves with the dates and barley.

Sayyidina Qatādah bin Nu'mān رضى الله عنه continues to narrate that once his uncle Rifā'ah رضى الله عنه bought some wheat flour from the Syrian tradesmen. This he stored in an upper storey room of his house together with some weapons, armour and swords. That night someone made a hole through the floor of the room and stole the flour and some weapons. The following morning his uncle reported the incident to him and they both set out to investigate. Upon enquiry it was learnt that the Bani Ubayrīq had been cooking and feasting the previous night.

People suspected that they were responsible for the theft, but they denied it and accused Sayyidina Labīd bin Sahl رضى الله عنه, who was a righteous and sincere Muslim. When he heard about their accusation, he drew his sword exclaiming, "Will I steal? By Allāh, this theft will have to be solved otherwise I will deal with you with this very sword!" His family beseeched him to let the matter rest since they were convinced of his innocence. They resolved that they would make further investigations until they conclusively prove the guilt of the Banu Ubayrīq.

Sayyidina Qatādah رضى الله عنه continues to report that his uncle instructed him to narrate the incident to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Upon reaching the noble presence he began, "A family belonging to my tribe, who have sour relations with the rest of us, made a hole into the room of my uncle Rifā'ah and stole some food and weapons. We have no need for the food, but request the return of our weapons.

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he would consult further to resolve the matter. When this news reached the Banu Ubayrīq, they spoke to a person named Usair bin Urwah. Consequently several persons approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entreating that a family of their tribe, who were true and pious Muslims, were accused by Qatādah bin Nu'mān, his uncle and their tribe of theft, without evidence and witnesses.

Sayyidina Qatādah رضى الله عنه continues to say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Without any evidence and witnesses you assert that a certain family stole from you when they are true Muslims and pious people!" He returned, wishing that he would have preferred that his wealth be lost rather than having to face the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When his uncle asked him what he had done, he informed him of what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had said. Upon hearing this Rifā'ah said, "From Allāh only do we seek help!"

Sayyidina Qatādah رضى الله عنه narrates that it was not long thereafter that Allāh revealed the above verses. The Banu Ubayrīq are referred to as *"the treacherous ones,"* who should not be defended. Where Allāh mentions, *"seek Allāh 's forgiveness," it* refers to forgiveness from the wrong of addressing Sayyidina Qatādah رضى الله عنه as Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did.

After these verse were revealed, the stolen weapons were presented before

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he promptly returned them to Sayyidina Rifā'ah رضى الله عنه. Bushair then joined the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* and lived with Sulāfa bint Sa'd. Thereafter the following verses were revealed viz. *"Whosoever opposes the messenger after the guidance...* (up to the verse) ...*has wandered far astray."*

When Bushair went to live with Sulāfa, Sayyidina Hassān bin Thābit رضى الله عنه recited some verse of poetry in which he mocked Sulāfa. When she heard of this, she saddled Bushair's camel and banished him to a rocky terrain saying, "You have made me a target of Hassān's poetry. I have no hope that you will be of any good to me!"

A REFUTATION OF THOSE WHO REJECT THE AHĀDĪTH

"Undoubtedly We have revealed to you the Book with the truth so that you may judge between people by that which Allāh has shown you." This verse makes it evident that Allāh taught the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the meaning and interpretation of the Qur'ān. Certain ignorant people have sprung up in this century claiming that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was no more than a postman who delivered the Qur'ān to us so that we may interpret it as we see fit.

The fallacy of their claim has been stated in Surah Nahl where Allāh says, *"We have revealed to you the Book so that you may expound to the people what has been revealed to them and so that they reflect"* [*Surah 16, verse 44*]. This verse makes it clear that the duty of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not only confined to conveying the Qur'ān, but entailed explaining it to the people and teaching them its meaning and interpretation.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST DEFENDING THE CASE OF THE TREACHEROUS ONES

"Do not be a solicitor for the treacherous ones and seek forgiveness from Allāh." Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to seek forgiveness because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not attach due importance to the plea of Sayyidina Qatadah رضى الله عنه and merely said to him that he will consult further to resolve the matter. Thus doing, the guilty party had the opportunity of driving their plea home and attempting to prove their innocence. In this way, they managed to secure some credibility.

Although producing evidence and witnesses is necessary, it is just as important that matters are promptly dealt with especially when such people are implicated who are known to disassociate from the Muslims and whose member is a hypocrite. Allāh then tells his Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Do not plead on behalf of those who deceive themselves. Verily Allāh does not like him who is deceitful and a sinner."*

These people think that they have escaped with their misdeeds and that they were successful in their endeavours, but Allāh shall punish them in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"They try to hide from people while they cannot hide from Allāh Who is with them when they confer secretly at night regarding those talks that Allāh dislikes. Allāh is Ever Aware of what they perpetrate."*

Allāh continues to censure when He says, *"Be warned that these are the very ones in whose defence you plead in the worldly life. So who will plead their case on the*

Day of Judgment and who will be their lawyer?" There shall be none to defend them on the Day of Judgment when every person will be concerned only about himself. In this verse, there is a stern warning to those who alter case files or bribe to clear themselves of their wrongs in this world. They should never think that they will escape in the next world where everything will be clear as daylight and none shall come to their aid;

"Whoever commits a sin or wrongs himself and then seeks Allāh's forgiveness, he will surely find that Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." To ensure this forgiveness, it is also necessary that wrongly acquired wealth be restored to its rightful owners. Allāh may forgive even the person who stole and left Madinah if he chose to draw closer instead of moving further away.

"Whoever earns a sin earns it only to his detriment. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise.'

THE SIN OF ACCUSING THE INNOCENT

"Whoever commits a minor sin or a major sin, then casts the blame upon an innocent, he has indeed burdened himself with a great slander and manifest sin." This action entails two sins. One is the original and the other is that of false accusation. The act is termed slanderous because it was perpetrated purposefully and not on a misunderstanding or based on misleading information. As great as the sin is, so too shall be the punishment.

"If it were not for the grace of Allāh upon you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] and His mercy, a party of them had surely resolved to mislead you." This they failed to accomplish because Allāh had informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of the truth through divine revelation. As a result *"They mislead none but themselves and they cannot harm you in the least. Allāh has revealed to you the Book and wisdom and taught you what you knew not. The grace of Allāh upon you has been tremendous indeed."*

Lesson: *"so that you may judge between people by that which Allāh has shown you."* This verse informs us that at times the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would pass Judgment according to his perception of events based on the principles outlined in the Qur'ān. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would not judge incorrectly in these matters and if he did err, Allāh would rectify the situation timeously.

The judges and jurists are also compelled to decide according to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, using their intellect where necessary. Their lone opinions are not considered. Their deductions may also be erroneous, as a result of which differences of opinion arise among them. Despite this, Allāh will still reward them because they exert themselves for the welfare of the Dīn *(religion)*, aspiring to acquire Allāh's pleasure.

WHICH CONSULTATIONS ARE COMMENDABLE?

"There is no good in most of their secret consultations (due to their sinful nature) except in him who enjoins charity, a good deed or reconciliation between the people. Whoever will do this seeking Allāh's pleasure, then We shall soon confer on him an immense reward." This verse is linked to a previous one where Allāh said,

"they confer secretly at night regarding those talks that Allāh dislikes." This referred to the incident when the Banu Ubayrīq conferred with each other regarding their plan to escape being blamed for the theft. However, the general context refers to all such similar situations.

Allāh says in Surah Mujādalah, *"O you who believe, when you consult secretly, then do not consult with regard to sin, transgression and disobedience to the messenger. (Rather) Consult regarding good and piety (taqwa). Fear that Allāh to Whom you shall all be gathered."* [*Surah 58, verse 9*]

THE VIRTUE OF RECONCILING FACTIONS

The verse lauds conferences that seek to reconcile people. There are tremendous rewards in resolving differences and uniting hearts between disputing factions, couples and others.

Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked them, "Should I not inform you of something that is superior to optional fasts, charity and Salāh?" When the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم begged to be enlightened, he said, "It is to reconcile people." He then added, "Disputes shave!" [*Abu Dawūd and Tirmidhi*]

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added, "I do not say that it shaves the hair, but it shaves the Dīn!" [*Tirmidhi*]

ADOPTING A WAY CONTRARY TO THAT OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم LEADS TO HELL

"Whosoever opposes the messenger after the guidance has become manifest to him and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall allow him to do that which he is doing and then enter him into Hell. It is the worst of abodes." This verse mentions two factors that will lead a person to Hell. The first is that one opposes the teachings of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم after receiving guidance.

This refers to those who received the knowledge of Islām, yet they refused to accept. Those are also implied who accept Islām and then turn apostate. The verse is brought here because of its reference to the person in the above incident (Bushair) who turned apostate after being a Muslim.

The second factor which will enter one into Hell is when a person does not follow the path of the Muslim public. This refers to the consensus of the Ummah commonly termed "Ijma Ummah".

IJMA *(CONSENSUS OF THE OPINION)* OF THE UMMAH IS ALSO A PROOF

Ijma *(consensus of the opinion)* of the Ummah is also regarded as a source of Islāmic legislation because whatever was taught by the Qur'ān and by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was transmitted from generation to generation through the ages. A person will be successful if he follows the teachings of the pious and learned scholars of the ages. It was only through these stages that the interpretation of the Qur'ān and Islāmic injunctions has reached us.

They taught us our beliefs and all our practices. That person will be

considered a disbeliever *(kāfir)* who refutes this necessary link and wishes to interpret Islāmic codes and Qur'ānic verses without referring to their teachings. So too are those who refute the authority of the Ahādīth and reject the common beliefs of the Muslims. Those are also disbeliever *(kāfir)* who claim that the Qur'ān was interpolated and that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the final messenger. So too will be the condition of those who say that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام died a natural death and was not raised to the heavens, and those who refute the five daily Salāh. All these people will be disbelievers *(kuffār)* because they stand in opposition to what was established from the time of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم and was believed in by all the Muslims throughout the ages.

"Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.146*) reports that Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه was questioned with regard to the proof for the authority of Ijma. Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه recited the entire Qur'ān thrice daily and extracted the above verse in support of Ijma.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Allāh had promised three things for his Ummah and guaranteed their safety from three things. These are:

⇒ *The entire 'Ummah shall never be destroyed by famine.*

⇒ *No enemy shall wipe out every single individual of the Ummah.*

⇒ *Allāh shall never allow them to reach a consensus on something that is wrong.* [Mishkāt p. 514]

Sayyidina Abu Mālik Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned three things which Allāh had guaranteed for the Ummah. They are:

1. *Their Prophet (Nābi) would never make a pray (du'ā) against them whereby they will all be destroyed.*
2. *The people of falsehood shall never gain the upper hand over those of the truth.*
3. *The 'Ummah will never be unanimous upon falsehood.*

REFUTATION OF AN IGNORANT STATEMENT

Some deviant people argue that if what they proclaim is incorrect, then why does Allāh permit them to continue in their ways? Why does He not destroy them instantly? Allāh Himself answers their question when He says, *"We shall allow him to do that which he is doing."* This is so because this world is a place of tests and trials and people are on belief as well as infidelity. If any person was forced into either of the two, there would be no choice; thus no test. When a person does not desist from his evil ways despite being warned, Allāh causes his heart to be further tainted. Allāh says in Surah Saff, *"When they remained crooked, Allāh further twisted their hearts."* [*Surah 61, verse 5*]

Allāh guides those who desire to be on the right path as He misleads those

who choose to remain on the wrong. The wrong path that leads to Hell is the one that is contrary to the path upon which the masses of the Muslims tread.

THE MUSHRIKĪN WILL NEVER BE FORGIVEN

"Verily Allāh shall not forgive that partners be ascribed to Him, but will forgive all other sins for whom He wills. Whosoever ascribes partners to Allāh has indeed wandered far astray." A similar verse has already been discussed in Surah Baqarah (verse 48) and one may refer to it for details.

Lesson: The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.l48*) writes that Allāh mentioned in an earlier verse, *"Indeed they have fabricated a great sin"* and here Allāh says, *"has indeed wandered far astray. "* The difference is that in the first instance the reference is to the Jews who refuted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم despite the fact that they knew he was the final prophet. Their action of disbelief *(kufr)* was a fabrication and they even attributed their refuting to Allāh by claiming that it was in their scriptures.

The above verse refers to the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* who had no divine scriptures and none had come to them before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Despite the truth being made apparent to them and the proofs coming to the fore, they chose to cling to their past deviation, causing them to wander even further astray. They cast aside the teachings of the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and increased in their deviant behaviour.

إِن يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ إِنَٰثًا وَإِن يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَٰنًا مَّرِيدًا ﴿117﴾
لَّعَنَهُ ٱللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿118﴾ وَلَأُضِلَّنَّهُمْ
وَلَأُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ وَلَءَامُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُبَتِّكُنَّ ءَاذَانَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ وَلَءَامُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُغَيِّرُنَّ
خَلْقَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَن يَتَّخِذِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ
خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿119﴾ يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿120﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا ﴿121﴾

(117) They supplicate only to females and call upon the rebellious Devil (Shaytān). (118) whom Allāh has cursed. He said, "I shall definitely take a stipulated share of Your bondsmen. (119) and I will surely lead them astray, certainly instil hopes within them, undoubtedly command them and they will definitely cut the ears of animals. I will certainly instruct them so they will change the appearances of Allāh 's creation. Whoever takes the devil (Shaytān) as his patron instead of Allāh, then indeed he has incurred a manifest loss. (120) He devil (Shaytān) promises .them and imbibes hopes within them. Devil (Shaytān) promises them only deception. (121) The abode of these people is Hell and they will not find an escape there from.

THE MUSHRIKĪN WORSHIP IDOLS AND OBEY DEVIL *(SHAYTĀN)*

Every act of disbelief *(kufr)*, polytheism *(shirk)* and disobedience to Allāh stems from the deceptions of devil *(Shaytān)*. When he was declared to be astray, he resolved to mislead the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and to take his share of them with him to destruction. When the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام spread out throughout the earth, he set his devious schemes into operation and began to steer them away from oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and Ibādah (*Allāh's worship*).

He taught them to worship idols and give them feminine names such as the famous Arab names of Lāt, Manāt and Uzzah. They prostrated to them, made offerings in their names, cut the ears of animals or pierced holes in their ears so that it be known that the animal was released in the names of the idols. The majority of mankind succumbed to his deviant ways and beckoned to his call.. Even so-called Muslims of today practise the custom of piercing the ears of infants with the belief that the child will not die in infancy. People who enter into Islām without understanding and learning the Dīn *(religion)* often practise the acts of polytheism passed on from their former Dīn *(religion)*.

An example of this is grave worship. Instead of idols, many Muslims have resorted to worshipping graves. If any of them were told to prostrate to an idol, they would flatly refuse, yet they see no harm in prostrating to a grave!

CHANGING THE CREATION OF ALLĀH

"I will certainly instruct them so they will change the appearances of Allāh's creation." There are many depictions of this present today. The most common of these is the shaving of beards and there is scarcely a home in the world devoid of this evil. Another example is the fashion of tattooing weird and wonderful pictures on the body. This is especially common among the Hindus, but the Muslims are hot on their heels.

Bukhari reports the hadith of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cited Allāh's curse upon those who draw tattoos and those who have themselves tattooed. Allāh also curses those women who trim their eyebrows and those who file their front teeth. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that all of these are accursed because they seek to alter the appearance of Allāh's creation.

When a woman heard that this was reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه, she came to him saying that she heard he was cursing women. He replied, "Why should I not curse those whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has cursed and who are also accursed in Allāh's book?" The woman told him that she had read the entire Qur'ān but not found any verse to that effect. He remarked, "If you had recited the Qur'ān you would have certainly come across such a thing. Did Allāh not say, *'Accept what the messenger has brought to you and abstain from that which he has forbidden you from'?"*

She replied that she had read that verse. Thereupon he said that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had forbidden the actions of those women whom he had cursed. Therefore, the prohibition of these acts are also intended by the Qur'ān

since it enjoins practice upon the things prescribed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and invokes abstention from those things that he had forbidden. [*Mishkāt p. 381*]

It is also forbidden for a person to castrate another or to have himself castrated. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that such persons are not from us. [*Mishkāt p. 69*]

The Shari'ah has instructed that circumcision be done, nails be pared and the hair of the armpits and pubic areas be removed. These do not constitute changing Allāh' s creation since Allāh's Dīn *(religion)* enjoins them. Every Muslim must act upon Allāh's commands even though certain nations encourage the growth of such hair *(like the Sikhs)*.

"Whoever takes the devil (Shaytān) as his patron instead of Allāh, then indeed he has incurred a manifest loss." This loss will be in terms of the punishment in the Hereafter.

"He devil (Shaytān) promises them and imbibes hopes within them." He encourages them to commit misdeeds and to disobey Allāh. He tells them that if they perform certain good deeds, they will suffer and be deprived of enjoyment. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Devil (Shaytān) promises you poverty and commands you to commit indecent acts."* [*Surah 2, verse 268*]

Devil *(Shaytān)* raises the hopes of youths by telling them to sin because there is still a long life ahead when they may repent. He then also tells the old people not to repent yet since they may still live longer. He enumerates the benefits of sin and promises much to people. However, *"Devil (Shaytān) promises them only deception."*

By hearkening to devil's *(Shaytān's)* promises and false hopes, a person only draws himself ever so close to destruction, as Allāh concludes by saying, *"The abode of these people is Hell and they will not find an escape therefrom."*

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ قِيلًا ﴿122﴾ لَّيْسَ
بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَآ أَمَانِىِّ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ ۗ مَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا يُجْزَ بِهِۦ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُۥ
مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿123﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِنَ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ مِن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا ﴿124﴾ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ
دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَٱتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ وَٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿125﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ
شَىْءٍ مُّحِيطًا ﴿126﴾

(122) Those who believe and do good deeds, We will soon enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever and ever. The promise of Allāh is true. Who camemore truthful in speech than Allāh? (123) This is not based upon your desires, nor on the desires of the people of book (Ahlul Kitāb). Whoever commits an evil deed will.meet its retribution and will not find for himself any friend, nor any ally besides Allāh. (124) Whoever does a good deed, whether male or female, as a believer, then these are the ones who shall enter Heaven (Jannah) and they will not be wronged the amount of the dint in a date stone. (125) Who is better in Dīn (religion) than he who submits himself before Allāh, is himself righteous, and follows the creed of Ibrahīm, being averse to all other Dīns (religions) and inclined towards Allāh? Allāh chose Ibrahīm for a friend. (126) To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Allāh is Ever Embracing of everything.

GLAD TIDINGS FOR THE BELIEVERS AND THE PROHIBITION AGAINST RELYING ON HOPES

Allāh commences by giving glad tidings to the believers by saying, "*Those who believe and do good deeds We will soon enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide forever and ever. The promise of Allāh is true. Who can be more truthful in speech than Allāh?*" Since the word of Allāh is the ultimate in reliability, the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* should commit themselves to living their lives according to the dictates of Allāh.

"This is not based upon your desires, nor on the desires of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb).*" "Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p.* 83) reports from Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه that the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* (Jews and Christians) claimed that none shall enter Heaven *(Jannah)* besides them, and the Quraish claimed that they will not be resurrected. Allāh revealed this verse with regard to these claims.

Sayyidina Masrūq Tabi'ī رحمة الله عليه reports that these verses were revealed when the Muslims and the Christians argued with each other, each claiming superiority over the next. The report of Sayyidina Ibn Abbās رضى الله عنه seems more accurate and correct.

Allāh addresses the Quraish that they judge between people, but when mention is made of resurrection, they content themselves by claiming that it will never happen. They merely entertain false hopes and desires. Reality is not based upon the hopes of any person. The truth of the matter is that "*Whoever commits an evil deed will meet its retribution and will not find for himself any friend, nor any ally besides Allāh.*"

Similar is the case with the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb).* They do not realise that the basis of salvation is not their vain hopes, but Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds. They entertained these hopes even though they were informed in their scriptures about the advent of the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and they were aware of his miracles. They are required to view this reality, believe in him and not just content themselves with the vain desire that Heaven *(Jannah)* is reserved for them.

If the opinion of Sayyidina Masrūq رحمة الله عليه is considered, then Allāh

addresses the Muslims in the verse as well. Allāh enjoins them not to entertain mere hopes of salvation, but they should remain steadfast on their Īmān and aspire for higher ranks by carrying out good deeds.

In this regard "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.152*) reports that Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه said, "Imām is not merely a desire, but consists of true testifying within the heart and is substantiated by action. Many a person has been beguiled by hopes in Allāh's mercy and left this world without a single good deed to their account. They claimed that they maintained favourable hopes in Allāh, but they lied. If they did have good hopes in Allāh, they would have carried out good actions."

THE RETRIBUTION FOR EVIL DEEDS

"Whoever commits an evil deed will meet its retribution..." According to this verse, the punishment of every sin will be meted to a person. However, punishment may be waived by repentance *(Taubah)*, Istighfār, good deeds and undergoing hardships.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited this verse to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, the latter exclaimed, "May my parents be sacrificed for you! Which of us do not sin? We will be punished for every sin?" Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Abu Bakr, you and your believing compatriots will be cleansed of your sins in this very world and will meet Allāh without a sin to your name. Other people [disbelievers *(kuffār)*] will have their sins accumulated until they receive the collective punishment on the Day of Judgment." [Tirmidhi]

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that the Muslims were very perturbed when this verse was revealed and expressed their concern to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He told them, "Keep treading correctly and doing good deeds. Every difficulty that afflicts a believer will be an expiation for his sins even to the extent of a thorn pricking him or when he gets hurt. All of these will serve to eradicate his sins." [*Muslim v.2 p.19*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh will remit the sins of a Muslim on account of every bit of fatigue, pain, worry, concern, hardship and grief that afflicts him even to the extent of a thorn pricking him." [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whatever difficulty afflicts a Mu'min is on account of his sins and Allāh forgives much more than what He punishes for." Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited verse 30 of Surah Shura where Allāh states, *"Whatever calamity befalls you in on account of what your hands earn, and Allāh forgives much more." [Tirmidhi]*

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه narrates that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated, "The believer *(Mu'min)* man and woman will continuously encounter difficulties in their lives, wealth and children until they reach Allāh without a single sin to their names." [*Tirmidhi*]

A TREMENDOUS REWARD FOR BELIEVER *(MU'MIN)* MEN AND WOMEN

"Whoever does a good deed, whether male or female, as a believer, then these are the

ones who shall enter Heaven (Jannah) and they will not be wronged the amount of the dint in a date stone." "Lubābun Nuqūl" reports from Sayyidina Masrūq رحمة الله عليه that the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* admitted that the Muslims were on par with them upon revelation of the verse "This is not based upon your desires, nor on the desires of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb).* "The above verse was then revealed in reply to this statement.

The condition of Imān (belief) is stipulated in this verse to inform the Ahlul Kitāb and all others that no good deed shall receive any reward without Imān *(belief).* A believer *(Mu'min)* and a disbeliever *(kāfir)* can therefore never be on par with each other.

THE DEFINITION OF THE RIGHTEOUS

"Who is better in Dīn (religion) than he who submits himself before Allāh, is himself righteous and follows the creed of Ibrahīm, being averse to all other Dīns (religions) and inclined towards Allāh." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" explains that the person who submits himself before Allāh" is one who has sincerely devoted himself to Allāh and does not accept another as his Lord.

Other commentators maintain that the person who *"submits himself before Allāh"* is that person who focuses his attention only upon Allāh. Others are of the opinion that he is one who casts his face down upon the ground in prostration before Allāh.

"... is himself righteous..." This excerpt means that the person is one who carries out his deeds with perfection, as they should be carried out. The Arabic word used here is derived from the root word "ihsān." When Jibr'īl عليه السلام asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the meaning of "ihsān," he replied, "That you worship Allāh as if you see Him. If you cannot see him, then He definitely sees you."

The person with the above attributes follows the best Dīn *(religion)* because all other Dīns *(religions)* are founded upon disbelief *(kufr)*, warranting eternal torment for their adherents.

"Allāh chose Ibrahīm for a friend." A person whom Allāh chooses as His friend must certainly be beloved to Allāh. Therefore, it makes perfect sense to follow the creed and Dīn *(religion)* of a person like Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام achieved this noble position because of his tremendous sacrifices for Allāh. He invited a nation of idolaters (including his father) towards oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* in the face of immense opposition. They then cast him into the fire (*which Allāh cooled for him*) and he then had to leave his wife and child in a barren, rocky place where there was no hope of living. Thereafter he built the Ka'ba with his son and prayed to Allāh to bring into existence an Ummah the likes of that of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Whoever will sacrifice as he did will also become the associate and beloved of Allāh. A believer should submit his body and soul before Allāh, act with the quality of ihsān and sacrifice for the sake of Allāh. By acting in this manner, the disbeliever can never hope to equal him, even if the disbeliever be of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb).*

"To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth." Allāh may orchestrate events as He pleases and pass the laws He deems appropriate.

"Allāh is Ever Embracing of everything." Every single thing is within His knowledge and power. He is aware of every action and is perfectly Capable of giving retribution accordingly.

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي ٱلنِّسَآءِ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ فِي يَتَٰمَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ ٱلَّٰتِي لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَن تَنكِحُوهُنَّ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ وَأَن تَقُومُوا۟ لِلْيَتَٰمَىٰ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمًا ﴿127﴾

(127) They seek from you a ruling with regard to women. Tell them, "Allāh will give you a ruling concerning them and (concerning) that which is recited to you in the Book with regard to those orphaned girls to whom you do not give the right that is ordained for them, while you aspire to marry them. And (also recited to you in the Book are injunctions concerning) the feeble children and that you should deal justly with orphans. Indeed Allāh is Well Aware of whatever good you do.

THE INSTRUCTION TO RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF ORPHANS

Bukhari (*v.2 p.661*) records a hadith in which Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها narrates that a certain person was the guardian and joint heir of an orphan girl. He neither wanted to marry her, nor did he allow her to marry anyone else because he feared that the husband will gain possession of her wealth. This made things difficult for her. Consequently Allāh revealed the above verse in this regard.

It is recorded in Fat'hul Bāri (*v.8 p.265*) from Ibn Abi Hātim رحمة الله عليه that the cousin of Sayyidina Jābir رضی الله عنه had inherited some wealth from her deceased father's estate. Sayyidina Jābir رضی الله عنه did not want to marry her, neither did he want another to be married to her for fear of her losing her wealth. The above verse was revealed with reference to this incident.

"They seek from you a ruling with regard to women. Tell them, 'Allāh will give you a ruling concerning them and (concerning) that which is recited to you in the Book with regard to those orphaned girls to whom you do not give the right that is ordained for them, while you aspire to marry them." In this way these women are placed in a distressful situation, which is contrary to the dictates of the Shari'ah.

Thereafter Allāh goes on to say, 'And (also recited to you in the Book are injunctions concerning) the feeble children and that you should deal justly with orphans." These are pieces of advice given in the Qur'ān for people to put into practice. The reference in this verse is to what has passed earlier in Surah Nisā (*verses 2 and 3*).

"..... and that you should deal justly with orphans." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.161*) writes that this instruction is to rulers to see that the rights of orphans are fulfilled. Guardians and those who dissolve estates are also addressed to ensure that they perpetrate no injustices when orphans have to be accorded their shares of an estate.

"Indeed Allāh is well aware of whatever good you do." Allāh will reward those who deal justly with the weak and feeble orphans who cannot fend for themselves.

وَإِنِ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنۢ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَآ أَن يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا
صُلْحًا ۚ وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنفُسُ الشُّحَّ ۚ وَإِن تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا (128) وَلَن تَسْتَطِيعُوٓا أَن تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ
حَرَصْتُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ ۚ وَإِن تُصْلِحُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا (129) وَإِن يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّن
سَعَتِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا (130)

(128) If a woman fears ill treatment or neglect from her husband, there shall be no sin on the couple should they make terms of reconciliation between themselves. Reconciliation is best; but selfishness has been made present in the minds of men. If you deal cordially and adopt abstinence, then indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do. (129) You will never be able to maintain perfect justice between women however much you may desire to. So do not ignore any of them totally, leaving her in suspense. If you reconcile and adopt abstinence, then surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (130) If the couple separate, Allāh will make each of them independent through His generosity. Allāh is All Embracing, The Wise.

RECONCILING A COUPLE AND MAINTAINING EQUALITY AMONG WIVES

A narration of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها is recorded in Abu Dawūd, in which she says that one of the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidah Sauda رضى الله عنها, feared that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would separate from her. This was when she grew old. Consequently, she proposed that her turn to be with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should be given to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. The first of the above verses was revealed with regard to this.

"Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p. 84*) reports a narration of Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyab رحمة الله عليه wherein he relates that the daughter of Sayyidina Muhammad bin Muslima رضى الله عنه was married to Sayyidina Rafi bin Khudaij رضى الله عنه. On account of some dispute, or due to her old age, he decided to divorce her. She requested him not to do so, suggesting that he need not stipulate

a turn for her when meeting with his wives. The verse was revealed in reference to this.

Hākim reports from Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها the following reason for the revelation of the verse, *"Reconciliation is best..."* She narrates that a person had a wife from whom he had many children. He, however, decided to divorce her and marry another woman instead. She proposed that he rather remain married to her, but need not include her in his visits to his wives.

Nikāh *(marriage)* is exceptionally important for both a man and a woman, in which there are great worldly and religious benefits. They live in peace, harmony and love, but the situation may arise when discontentment creeps between them. When reconciliation is impossible, the Shari'ah has permitted divorce as a last resort.

It may also occur that a man requires to wed several wives at a time, especially in certain special circumstances when multiple marriages are the best way to ensure the well being of widowed women and their children. When a man marries several wives, it is incumbent on him that he deal with them with equality and justice. Together with providing for them in exactly equal terms, he also has to ensure that he spends an equal number of nights with each of them.

Maintaining equality and justice in this way is within the ability of any man. However, he will not be liable for not being equal in his love and affection for each of them, because the inclinations of the heart are not in his control. Even the noble Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم knew of this problem. When stipulating the nights for his wives, he would supplicate thus to Allāh, "O Allāh, this is my allotment as I am able to do. Do not reprimand me for what I am unable to do." [Tirmidhi]

The person who does not deal equally with his wives wherever possible, shall appear before Allāh on the Day of Judgment in such a way that one half of his body will be paralysed. [*Tirmidhi*]

If a person wants to divorce any of his wives because of his inability to deal justly with them, it will be appropriate that the wife concerned make certain terms with him to ensure that he does not divorce her. She may forgo her nightly turn in favour of another wife, or even propose that he reduce her maintenance or remit it altogether. This is what Allāh refers to when He says, *"If a woman fears ill treatment or neglect from her husband, there shall be no sin on the couple should they make terms of reconciliation between themselves. Reconciliation is best..."* It is best especially when considering that the couple may have spent a along time together and when the wife is prepared to forfeit a right of hers. The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" interprets the verse to read "reconciliation is better than divorce, ill treatment and disputes."

"..... but selfishness has been made present in the minds of men." The Arabic word used in this verse for selfishness ("shuh") denotes a type of selfishness that is coupled with greed. In reality, each of these evil traits are inseparable. A person with either of them must posses the other as well.

Since love for the world is the cause of both of these traits, Allāh says in Surah Hashr (*Surah 59, verse 9*) and Surah Taghābun (*Surah 64, verse 16*), *"Whosoever is protected from 'shuh' these are the successful ones indeed."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated, "The worst of traits in a person is 'shuh', that instils terror within him. The other is the cowardice that extracts the soul." [*Mishkāt p. 165 and Nasa'i v.1 p.34*]

In explaining this verse, commentators say that because greed is ever present in the hearts of men and he does not want to spend, reconciliation becomes easier. When he realises that it will be to his benefit to waive her turn or not to grant her the full maintenance, he is more likely to keep her in his marriage. By remaining together in marriage all will be well, especially for the children.

"If you deal cordially and adopt abstinence, then indeed Allāh is Informed of what you do." Allāh shall reward every person, be it the husband or the wife, when they abide by this.

After stressing the importance of reconciliation and peace-making, Allāh draws attention to an issue of great significance. Allāh says, *"You will never be able to maintain perfect justice between women however much you may desire to."* This, as mentioned before, refers to the inclinations of the heart.

If a person is inclined more towards a certain wife, he should not let this cause him to oppress any of the others, as Allāh says, *"So do not ignore any of them totally, leaving her in suspense."* (i.e. when her rights are not fulfilled she can neither regard herself as a wife nor as a single woman. Her position is thus undefined).

Allāh then adds, *"If you reconcile and adopt abstinence, then surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

If all fails and the couple cannot be reconciled, then Allāh offers consolation to each by saying, *"If they separate, Allāh will make each of them independent through His generosity."* Neither party should think that the, other will be hapless without the other. Allāh shall care for either of them and each shall receive what Allāh has appointed for them. He will, if He pleases, find each of them another home wherein they will be content. All this is easy for Allāh because *"Allāh is All Embracing, The Wise."*

Especially those people who keep their first wives in constant oppression should reflect deeply upon these verses. Neither do they divorce them, nor do they treat them well. They do this so that she may live in want and desperation. They should bear in mind that Allāh shall call them to account on the Day of Judgment. If they cannot maintain justice among their wives, they should let one go as Allāh mentioned in verse 3 of Surah Nisā that only one wife be kept in this situation.

When the enemies of Islām object to multiple marriages, some ignorant Muslims quote the verse, *"You will never be able to maintain perfect justice between women however much you may desire to."* They add that since equality between wives is impossible, it follows that Islām forbids multiple marriages. They say that it is therefore necessary that a person marry only one wife at a time. In trying to appease the enemies of Islām, these people have altered the law of the Shari'ah. As explained earlier, the verse refers to the inclinations of the heart. When a person is able to maintain equality in matters that are within his ability,

he is allowed to marry up to four wives at a time.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا (131) وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ
وَكِيلًا (132) إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ
قَدِيرًا (133) مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِندَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا (134)

(131) To Allāh belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Most definitely We have charged those to whom We had conferred the Book before you, as well as yourselves, to fear Allāh. If you disbelieve, then to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Allāh is Independent, Praiseworthy. (132) To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and Allāh suffices as a Defender. (133) If Allāh wills, He may remove you and produce others. Allāh is Most Able to do that. (134) Whosoever desires the reward of this world, with Allāh is the reward of this world and the Hereafter. Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing.

EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH BELONGS TO ALLĀH AND HE IS INDEPENDENT, PRAISEWORTHY, ALL HEARING AND ALL SEEING.

These verses emphasise that everything is the creation Of Allāh. He may deal with them as He pleases and may pass any law He desires. None has the right to object.

"Most definitely We have charged those to whom We had conferred the Book before you, as well as yourselves, to fear Allāh." This includes practising on the entire Dīn *(religion)* and abstaining from all sins. However, *"If you disbelieve, then (this will not harm Allāh in the least because) to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Allāh is Independent, Praiseworthy."* The obedience as well as the disobedience of any person cannot affect Allāh at all and only He is most worthy of all praise in all situations.

Thereafter Allāh stresses the point by repeating, *"To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and Allāh suffices as a Defender."*

"If Allāh wills, He may remove you and produce others. Allāh is Most Able to do that." Nothing is difficult for Allāh and every person should consider it a privilege to worship Allāh because He needs no one.

"Whosoever desires the reward of this world, with Allāh is the reward of this world and the Hereafter." No person should seek the rewards of only this world from

Allāh otherwise they will be deprived of the greater rewards of the Hereafter. Since Allāh is in control of the rewards of both the worlds, a person should beseech Him for both. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.166*]

Sayyidina Zaid bin Thābit رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person whose concern is only the Hereafter, Allāh shall gather together all his dispersed affairs, grant him contentment of heart and the world will come kneeling before him. However, the person whose only concern is this world, Allāh shall cause all his affairs to disperse, place poverty before his eyes and he will receive only that much of the world as is ordained for him." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v.4 p.121*]

"Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing." Allāh knows who intends the things of the world and who desires the things of the Hereafter. He knows whose actions are performed for show and will repay them accordingly.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَٱللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعْدِلُوا۟ ۚ وَإِن تَلْوُۥٓا۟ أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿135﴾

(135) O you who believe! Be firm in establishing justice and be witness for Allāh even if it be against yourselves, your parents and relatives. Be he affluent or poor, Allāh is closer to each of them. So do not follow your passions in enforcing justice. If you distort your speech or turn away, then indeed Allāh is Well Informed of what you do.

TRUTHFUL TESTIMONY AND STEADFASTNESS UPON EQUITY

"Lubābun Nuqūl" (*p. 85*) reports an incident from the commentator Suddi رحمة الله عليه, in which two people presented their dispute before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. One was wealthy and the other was poor. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was inclined towards the poor person since it generally occurs that the rich oppress the poor. The first of the above verses was revealed with regard to this.

Justice demands that favouritism should not be shown to any party. Enforcing justice will entail that testimony be given and oaths be taken. However, it is necessary that the witnesses be truthful, for which reason Allāh speaks of witnesses testifying for Allāh only. The witness should be precise and impartial, and he should not distort his speech so that his statements become ambiguous. By doing this, the oppressor may be acquitted or the judge may find it difficulty to pass Judgment.

The witness should also not refuse to present testimony since this could cause the right of another to be usurped. This is referred to when Allāh says, *"if you distort your speech or turn away, then indeed Allāh is Well Informed of what you do."*

In the concluding portion of Surah Baqarah Allāh says, *"Witnesses should not refuse when they are summoned"* (*verse 282*). Allāh also says thereafter, *"Do not conceal testimony, for whoever conceals it, then verily he has a sinful heart."* [*Surah 2, verse 283*]

The verse emphasises that testimony be given even *"if it be against yourselves, your parents and relatives."* If the testimony be to the detriment of the people concerned, the detriment will be that of this temporary world only. This is insignificant when compared to the eternal detriment of the Hereafter that has to be faced for failing to uphold justice.

"Be he affluent or poor, Allāh is closer to each of them." This part of the verse accentuates that the financial condition of the person against whom the testimony or the verdict is passed should not be taken into consideration. Wealth and poverty are both from Allāh and do not reflect the status a person holds with Allāh. None has a closer relationship with His bondsmen than Allāh Himself.

It is indeed unfortunate that witnesses and judges look at the people involved when giving testimony or passing Judgment. They hesitate when a relative or wealthy person is involved, thus supporting oppression and subjecting themselves to the torments of the Hereafter.

Even knowledgeable people flow with the tide of partiality when family and nationality are concerned. Recent history bears testimony to the fact that when India was partitioned, many Muslims fled the atrocities of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and took refuge with other Muslims. They lawfully bought land from the locals and managed to earn a living. However, when the native Muslims of these regions were overcome by tribal emotions, they began evicting these refugees from their land.

Untold atrocities and oppression were perpetrated and properties were seized from them. In this mayhem, even knowledgeable people and leaders were swept away by feudalism, shouting slogans that it was their land. They considered the prices paid to them for their land by the refugees as a profit and acted in stark contradiction to the verse *"be firm in establishing justice."*

If hearts are imbued with justice, then none would fear to speak in the face of public opposition, tyrants would receive no support and oppressed people would get their just dues. It has become a profession for many people that they are paid to give false testimony and are to be found daily in courtrooms. This is Harām and contrary to the verse *"be witness for Allāh."*

Sayyidah Aysha رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked them if they knew who will be the first to reach Allāh's shade on the Day of Judgment. When they submitted that only Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم knew best, he said, "They are those who accept their rights when it is given to them, give what is due to others when asked from them, and judge between people as they would pass Judgment for themselves. i.e. As they wish that justice and the truth prevail when they are judged, so too they desire the same for others." [*Mishkāt p. 322*]

"O you who believe, be firm in establishing justice and be witness for Allāh..." "This injunction applies to all believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Leaders should be the first to

practise justice so that the environment is created for justice to prosper. They should also ensure that they appoint to the post of magistrate such people who possess knowledge and piety *(Taqwa)* so that no injustice is perpetrated. They should be people who judge in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah and not according to the oppressive system of occidental legislatures.

"O you who believe, be firm in establishing justice and be witness for Allāh..." Surah Mā'idah contains a very similar verse (*Surah 5, verse 8*). From a combination of the two, it is learnt that justice and truthful witnesses both ensure Allāh's pleasure.

"........indeed Allāh is well informed of what you do." This serves to remind one that Allāh is Omnipresent and that he should keep this in mind whenever he is called on to judge or to be witness.

Lesson: *"So do not follow your passions in enforcing justice."* This is a brief summary and emphasis of what was previously stated. Oppression results when the desires are followed instead of the truth and the orders of Allāh are ignored.

Another interpretation of this verse is that if passions are followed, people will deviate from justice. It may also mean that if passions are followed, a person will never be able to administer justice.

Lesson: Just as relations should not be an obstacle to the enforcement of justice, enmity should also not hinder it. Allāh says in the second verse of Surah Mā'idah, *"Enmity for a nation, because they prevented you from the Masjid-ul Harām, should never spur you to be unjust."* In verse 8 of Surah Mā'idah Allāh says, *"Enmity for a nation should never spur you to be unjust.*

Lesson: Islām lays great emphasis on the enforcement of justice and truth, and has outlined the principles for their establishment. Irrespective of who the person involved may be, Islām supports the one who is right and strongly opposes injustice and oppression. Since the inception of communism, people have been obsessed with the belief that the rich should be subdued even if the poor are the oppressors.

It is often witnessed that when the rich and the poor are involved in a dispute, most people support the poor, whereas it is justice that has to be given support. If a wealthy person employed a poor person for some work and then fails to pay him or pays him less that his dues, then undoubtedly it will be the poor person that must be defended. On the other hand, if a poor person seized wrongful possession of a rich person's money, the poor person must be made to return the money. Islām stands opposed to injustice. If it stems from the rich, they will be confronted, and if it stems from the poor, they too must be remanded.

Labourers now take unfair advantage of their rights and demand more that what is due to them. If they do not receive their demands, they go on strike, and then have the audacity to demand remuneration for the period of the strike. Even if the owners of the factories are forced by the law of any country to pay for period of closure, it will be Unlawful *(Harām)* for the labourers to accept the money in this situation.

The labourers are also at fault when they are paid for eight hours of work, but complete less than eight hours of work. Some time is always wasted in unnecessary talk and activities that often have no bearing on their actual work. In such a situation, it will be Unlawful *(Harām)* for them to accept their full salaries. People who support such workers are oppressors themselves.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ
وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ
وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا (136) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ ءَامَنُوا۟
ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ ٱزْدَادُوا۟ كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ ٱللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًۢا (137)

(136) O you who believe, believe in Allāh, His messenger, the Book that He revealed to His messenger and the Book that was revealed before. Whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His messengers and the Last Day, then indeed he has wandered far astray. (137) Verily those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe, then disbelieve and increase in disbelief, it does not behove Allāh to forgive them, nor to guide them to the right path.

THE COMMAND TO BELIEVE IN ALLĀH, HIS MESSENGERS, HIS BOOKS, HIS ANGELS AND IN THE LAST DAY

The first verse enjoins the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* to *"believe in Allāh, His messenger, the Book that He revealed to His messenger and the Book that was revealed before. Whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His messengers and the Last Day, then indeed he has wandered far astray."* This verse contains the principal factors of Belief *(Imān)*. It is obligatory that every person believes in these things to qualify as a Believer *(Mu'min)*.

The famous hadith of Jibr'īl عليه السلام adds a further factor as belief in Taqdīr *(predestination)*. Once a person believes in all of these, he will have to believe in the entire Dīn *(religion)* because all of these have been detailed in the Qur'ān and by Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The person who denies anything conclusively reported from the Qur'ān or the Ahādīth shall be a disbeliever *(kāfir)*.

Thereafter Allāh discusses the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. In the beginning of Surah Baqarah, the motives and origin of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* were discussed. They placed the attainment of the world as their objective and feigned belief *(Imān)* while disbelief *(kufr)* was lurking in their hearts.

Some were inspired to accept Islām, but the others fell deeper into the yawning abyss of disbelief *(kufr)* without ever being able to perceive the reality of the Hereafter. When a person dies as a disbeliever *(kāfir)*, he is doomed to eternal destruction and will never find guidance to reach the bliss of Heaven *(Jannah)*.

Certain commentators maintain that the verse refers to the Jews. They believed, then succumbed to the worship of the calf. They then repented, but later disbelieved in Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Thereafter, they excelled in their

disbelief until they even knowingly rejected the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.
["Rūhul Ma'āni"]

"...*nor (does it behove Allāh) to guide them to the right path.*" One of the interpretations is that Allāh will never lead them to the road to Heaven *(Jannah)*. Another meaning is that they will never be guided to accept the truth because of their persistent disbelief. Thus, they will never be inspired to repent and believe. As Allāh says in Surah Saff, "*When they remained crooked, Allāh further twisted their hearts.*" [*Surah 61, verse 5*]

بَشِّرِ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (138) ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَيَبْتَغُونَ عِندَهُمُ ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ ٱلْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا (139)

(138) Give to the hypocrites the glad tidings of an agonising punishment.... (139) (They are) those who take the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers. Do they seek honour from them? Indeed all honour is for Allāh only.

HONOUR IS ONLY FOR ALLĀH

This verse also chides the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. Allāh says, "*Give to the hypocrites the glad tidings of an agonising punishment...*" Although glad tidings are for joyous occasions, it is used in this verse for punishment. This is so because the hypocrites *(munāfiqīn)* expect good results from their despicable behaviour and the use of these ironic words in this verse expresses their foolishness.

The hypocrites *(munāfiqīn)* befriended the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, telling them that they were with them, just as they would tell the same to the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. In reality, they were with neither of the two, as will be mentioned in the ensuing verses viz. "*Swaying between, they are neither towards these, nor towards those*" (*verse 143*). Neither of the two groups even regarded them as part of their respective group, yet the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* thought themselves to have successfully infiltrated the ranks of both groups. They thus hoped to derive benefit from both.

The hypocrites declined to accept Islām thinking that if the disbelievers were to overpower the Muslims, they [the Hypocrites] would lose their honour and respect by being Muslims. Therefore Allāh says, "*Do they seek honour from them [the disbelievers]? Indeed all honour is for Allāh only.*" Allāh accords respect and honour to whomsoever He desires and snatches it away when He pleases. The honour that the disbelievers enjoy because of their wealth and properties pales into insignificance before the honour that Allāh shall accord the believers. Consequently Allāh granted the believers numerous victories over the disbelievers and they, together with the hypocrites, were disgraced. Honour was then conferred on the believers, dashing all the hopes of the hypocrites. In the hereafter as well, the lot of the hypocrites will be a most pitiable and disgraceful one.

The present sorry state of the Muslims is due to their neglect of the demands of Imān. Every Muslim should regard Islām to be the greatest honour. Muslims

must seek honour from Allāh and maintain a cordial relationship with other Muslims. They should never look for honour in the lifestyles, dressing and behaviour of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. No honour can be found in the mannerisms and culture of the people whom Allāh does not honour.

Sayyidina Tāriq bin Shihāb رحمة الله عليه narrates that he accompanied Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضى الله عنه on a journey to Syria during the Caliphate *(Khilāfah)* of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. He relates that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه dismounted his camel and, placing his leather socks upon his shoulders, began to lead the camel by its reigns. Sayyidina Abu Ubaidah رضى الله عنه addressed him saying, "O Leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)*! You are leading the camel by its reigns with your socks upon your shoulders. I do not deem it appropriate that the people of the city, the soldiers and the leaders of the Christians see you in this state."

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه exclaimed, "Shame on you, O Abu Ubaidah! If anyone besides you had made that statement, I would have meted out such a grievous punishment that it would have been a lesson for the entire Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! We (the Arabs) were a nation that was disgraced. Allāh granted us honour by virtue of Islām. By Allāh! If we seek honour in anything besides that by which Allāh has honoured us, then Allāh shall disgrace us once more!" [*Mustadrak of Hākim v.1 p.62*]

It is witnessed today that many who claim to be Muslims adopt the mannerisms of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. They parade with clean-shaven faces and western clothing, aping the behaviour, food and drink of their enemies. They even adopt their political constitutions, thinking that all of these things will bring them honour! They consider it a shame to follow the Qur'ān and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

They are embarrassed to dress Islāmically and to conduct their functions (especially weddings) according to the dictates of the Shari'ah.

Many Muslims today pursue honour in fostering friendship with the disbelievers just as the hypocrites had done in the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They do not see the honour in following the Shari'ah of Allāh, yet see honour on bowing to the dictates of the disbelievers! The disbelievers stood in awe of the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضى الله عنهم. How can the disbelievers have any regard for the Muslims who now kneel before them and appear to be replicas of them? What respect can they show to them?

Allāh says in Surah Munafiqūn, *"Honour is only for Allāh, His messenger and the* believers *(Mu'minīn), but the* hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn) know it not"* [*Surah 63, verse 8*]. Muslims have been deprived of honour because they do not fulfill the demands of Islām and belief *(Imān)*.

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا
تَقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ جَامِعُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ

وَالْكَٰفِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِن كَانَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَٰمَةِ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ
لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾

(140) It has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allāh being rejected and ridiculed, you should not sit with them until they engage in other talks. Without doubt, in that case (if you remain with them), you will be just like them. Surely Allāh will gather the hypocrites and the disbelievers all together in Hell. (141) They wait in eager anticipation for a calamity to befall you. If you gain victory from Allāh, they say, "Were we not with you?" If the disbelievers win a share. they tell them, "Were we not victorious over you and protected you from the believers?" Allāh will judge between them on the Day of Judgment. Allāh shall never grant the disbelievers victory over the believers (Mu'minīn).

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST SITTING IN THE COMPANY OF DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE HYPOCRITICAL STATEMENTS OF THE HYPOCRITES *(MUNĀFIQĪN)*

The above verse reminds the Muslims off a previously revealed verse of Surah An'ām viz. *"When you see those who engross themselves (with ridicule and sarcasm) with our verses, then turn away from them till they engage themselves in some other talk. If the devil (Shaytān) makes you forget, then, after recollection, do not sit in the company of the oppressive folk."* [*Surah 6, verse 68*]

In their gatherings, the Polytheists *(Mushrikīn)*used to mock and jeer at the Qur'ānic verses, making it one of their pastimes. Allāh instructed the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* to avoid such gatherings until they changed their talks.

The verse under discussion refers to the verse of Surah An'ām when it says, *"It has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allāh being rejected and ridiculed, you should not sit with them until they engage in other talks. Without doubt, in that case, you will be just like them."* The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* were also involved in such activities. The Muslims are warned not to participate in these talks because if they were ever affected by what was being said, they would also become disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Even if they were not influenced, they would share in the sin.

The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that the meaning of being like them refers to sharing in the sin since it will be sinful to participate in these gatherings despite being able to object or, at least, to leave. He adds that it could also mean that the Muslim will share in the disbelief *(kufr)* because participation in their gatherings indicates that one is pleased with their actions. To be pleased with the disbelief of another is also disbelief.

He writes further that some commentators have deduced from this verse that it is Unlawful *(Harām)* to associate with sinners and innovators (those involved in Bid'ah). This is the opinion of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ibrahīm Nakha'ī رضى الله عنه. It is reported that a fasting person was once in the company of someone who was consuming liquor. Sayyidina Umar bin Abdul Aziz رحمة الله عليه had the fasting person also punished and then recited the above verse to him in substantiation.

It is deduced from the verse that it is not sufficient to merely show disapproval to actions of disbelief *(kufr)* by looking displeased or feeling displeasure within one's heart. It is incumbent *(Fardh)* that a person leaves their presence. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.174*]

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* are gathered and a person who is able to convincingly contest their ridicule of Islām leaves their gathering without doing so, then this will not be considered to be prevention. It will be necessary for him to speak in defence of Islām and debate them.

When a Muslim cannot answer the derision of the disbelievers (either due to ignorance or due to the overpowering presence of disbelievers he should, at the very least, leave such a gathering.

"Surely Allāh will gather the hypocrites and the disbelievers all together in Hell." Muslims should rather remain in the company of those who are destined for Heaven *(Jannah)*; not with those who will all be gathered together in Hell.

The hearts of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* are never with the Muslims and, it is for this reason that they *"wait in eager anticipation for a calamity to befall you. If you gain victory from Allāh they say, 'Were we not with you?"* This they say so that they may also receive a portion of the booty.

"If the disbelievers win a share (win a battle), they tell them, 'Were we not victorious over you..." (i.e. Did we not join ranks with the Muslims when they overpowered you, thereby learning their secrets and weaknesses, which we divulged to you and which allowed you now to overcome them? In this way, we) *"protected you from the believers?"* The method of the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* was that they constantly discouraged the Muslims from fighting the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. When the occasion for battle did arise, they then deserted the Muslims (as was witnessed at Uhud). Thus, the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* desired to benefit from the fortunes of both parties.

"Allāh will judge between them on the Day of Judgment." The Believers *(Mu'minīn)* will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* and the others shall suffer only misery. Although their worldly behaviour (hypocrisy, plots and deceit) seemed to profit them, the profits were only temporary. In the Hereafter, they will see the error of their ways.

"Allāh shall never grant the disbelievers (kuffār) victory over the believers *(Mu'minīn)."* On the Day of Judgment, Allāh shall never allow the disbelievers to overwhelm the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. However, as a test for the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* and merely to humour the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, Allāh allows the disbelievers to gain victory in the battles of the world. Sayyidina Ibn Abbās and Ali رضى الله عنهم have tendered this interpretation.

After quoting this, the author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that another interpretation is that in this world, Allāh shall never allow the disbelievers *(kuffār)* to totally overcome the Muslims in such a way that all the Muslims are obliterated.

Yet another interpretation is that the disbelievers shall never be able to prove the superiority of their Dīn's *(religions)* over Islām. [*"Rūhul Ma'āni" v.5 p.175*]

The author of "Hidāya" uses this verse to substantiate the ruling that a disbeliever *(kāfir)* can never be guardian over a Muslim e.g. A disbeliever *(kāfir)* father cannot be guardian of his Muslim children, neither has he the authority to marry them off.

إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُوا۟ كُسَالَىٰ
يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (142) مُّذَبْذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ لَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ
وَلَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا (143) يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَجْعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
سُلْطَٰنًا مُّبِينًا (144) إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِى ٱلدَّرْكِ ٱلْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا
(145) إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ وَٱعْتَصَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (146) مَّا
يَفْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَءَامَنتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا (147)

(142) Indeed the hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh whereas He deceives them. When they stand up in Salāh, they stand up lazily, to be seen by people and they remember Allāh only a little therein. (143) Swaying between, they are neither towards these, nor towards those. You shall never find a way for him whom Allāh has led astray. (144) O you who believe, choose not the disbelievers as friends in place of the believers. Do you wish that Allāh establish a clear proof against you? (145) Most assuredly, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest depth of the fire, and you will never find a helper for them. (146) Except those who repent, amend, trust firmly in Allāh and devote their Dīn (religion) solely for Allāh. These shall be among the believers. Very Allāh shall soon confer on the believers an enormous reward. (147) What must Allāh punish you for if you are grateful and believe? Allāh is Most Appreciative, All Knowing.

THE DECEIT OF THE HYPOCRITES *(MUNĀFIQĪN)*, THEIR RELUCTANCE IN MATTERS OF DĪN *(RELIGION)* AND THE COMMAND TO THE MUSLIMS NOT TO BEFRIEND THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

These verses shed further light on the evils of the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* but

mention that the doors to repentance are never closed, even for them. The first verse is similar to the ninth verse of Surah Baqarah that says, *"They seek to beguile Allāh and those who believe."* They do this by telling the believers *(Mu'minīn)* that they are also believers and expect to receive the same bounties from Allāh as are accorded to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*; as if Allāh does not know that these bounties are not for them on account of their disbelief.

Allāh says, ... *whereas Allāh deceives them."* Allāh shall punish them for their deception. The same word (deceive) is used here for Allāh as was used for them. This is merely for reasons of similarity of context.

"Rūhul Ma'āni" reports that certain commentators are of the opinion that this refers to the Day of Judgment when the hypocrites will want to share the light and illumination that will be given to the believers. The light with then be extinguished for them when a barrier will be placed between them and the believers. This episode is mentioned in Surah Hadīd, where Allāh says, *"it will be told to them, 'Retreat and seek a light!' A wall will be erected between them having a door, the inner of which shall contain mercy and from the exterior shall be punishment."* [*Surah 57, verse 13*]

Since the consequences of their actions shall affect them, Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"They only beguile themselves, but they realise it not."* [*Sūrah 2 verse 9*]

Thereafter Allāh makes mention of their Salāh. He says, *"When they stand up in Salāh they stand up lazily..."* Because of the absence of belief *(Imān)*, they have no regard for Salāh but only perform it because they had told everyone that they were believers *(Mu'minīn)*. If they were sincere in their Salāh, they would perform it with feeling and with the urge to earn the pleasure of Allāh.

They perform Salāh merely *"to be seen by people and they remember Allāh only a little therein."* The author of Bayānul Qur'ān writes that their Salāh was only a series of actions and the resemblance to Salāh ended just there. They were never allowed to lead the Salāh and they merely followed the Scholar *(Imām)*. In this condition, none would be aware if they did not even move their lips.

"Swaying between..." The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" writes that they were suspended between Belief *(Imān)* and Disbelief (*kufr*), and it may also be said that they lay between the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* and the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Satan *(Shaytān)* had left them in a state of confusion so they knew not which way to turn. Although in belief they were disbelievers *(kuffār)*, yet their external appearance was one of doubt.

"they are neither towards these, nor towards those." The Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* associated with the Muslims as well as the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and displayed love and concern for either party. In reality, they were never a part of either group. They were under the misconception that they were smart enough to appease both groups, yet both never considered them as their own. Despite their numerous oaths and promises, none could be convinced of their loyalty to them.

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The example of a hypocrite is like a goat between two pastures. It sometimes goes to the one and sometimes to the other" [Muslim]. Commentators of hadith say that the female goat is implied since she goes from pasture to pasture in search of a mate. [*Mirqāt*]

Lesson: The verse points to the fact that it is a trait of a hypocrite to display lethargy and reluctance for Salāh. Believers *(Mu'minīn)* should perform their Salāh with vigour and enthusiasm.

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The Salāh of a hypocrite is that he waits for the sun to turn yellow and lies between the horns of devil *(Shaytān)*. He then pecks at the ground four times and only remembers Allāh a little" [Muslim]. This means that he performs the prostration *(sajdah)* in such haste that he hardly rises from the one and he darts into the next; just as a hen pecks at her grains.

During the times of sunrise and sunset, the devil *(Shaytān)* stands before the sun and shakes his head so that it appears to onlookers that the rays are dancing. This he does because it is at these times that the worshippers of the sun engage in worship.

Once, after performing the Fajr Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم asked if a certain person was present. When the Companions *(Sahāba)* رضی الله عنهم replied in the negative, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم enquired the same with regard to another person. Again the reply was in the negative. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then said, "Verily these two Salāh (Fajr and Isha) are heavy on the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*. If you knew the reward for them you would present yourselves even if you had to come crawling on your knees." [*Mishkāt p. 96*]

In another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم stated, "By The Being Who controls my life! If any of them (those who absent themselves from Salāh in congregation) were to receive a tasty bone or two good hooves, they would present themselves for the Isha Salāh." [*Bukhari v.1 p.89*]

Those who hanker after the world will brave difficulties and sacrifice their sleep to attain some of it, but, because they do not have conviction in the rewards of the Hereafter, they are reluctant to perform good deeds.

Lesson: It is learnt from the Ahādīth that so much emphasis was laid on Salāh in the time of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that even the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* were constrained to present themselves. When the environment of Dīn *(religion)* is fostered, even the irreligious people will be forced to fall in line and be religious.

In a similar manner, when irreligiousness becomes rife and dominant in any society, even the pious become influenced. This has become the situation today. Those who do not perform their Salāh freely associate with others without the least bit of shame. They forgo Salāh after Salāh without any remorse. This will all be eradicated if the same environment is established as it existed in the time of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم.

"O you who believe, choose not the disbelievers as friends in place of the believers. Do you wish that Allāh establish a clear proof against you?" By adopting the actions prohibited by Allāh, a person becomes a sinner, thereby warranting the punishment of Allāh.

"Most assuredly, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest depth of the fire... " The author of "Rūhul Ma'āni" (*v.5 p.177*) writes that there are seven depths of Hell.

The first is called Hell, the second Lazā, the third Hutama, the fourth Sa'īr, the fifth Saqar, the sixth Jahīm and the seventh Hāwiyah. At times all are referred to as 'An nār' (The Fire).

He writes further that the Hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* will suffer even more severe punishment than the disbelievers *(kuffār)* because together with the practice of disbelief (*kufr*), they resorted to deceit and mockery of Islām.

"......and you will never find a helper for them..." None shall be able to help them nor lighten the punishment for them.

"......except those who repent, amend (their intentions and whatever else they may have marred), trust firmly in Allāh and devote their Dīn *(religion)* solely for Allāh." i.e. They accept Islām wholeheartedly and act only for the pleasure of Allāh, without ostentation and without the intention to merely profit from the gains of the Muslims, or to be saved from any losses that they might incur. If they do this, then *"These shall be amongst the believers. Very soon Allāh shall confer on the believers an enormous reward."*

"What must Allāh punish you for if you are grateful and believe?" Allāh does not derive any benefit from punishing a person. He punishes in accordance to His wisdom and disbelief *(kufr)* is indeed a severe ingratitude that should be avoided at all costs to be saved from Allāh' s punishment.

"Allāh is most appreciative, All knowing." He shall reward people for their Belief *(Imān)* and deeds, for nothing is beyond His knowledge.

GLOSSARY

This glossary gives only a breef, introductory meaning of each word and is by no means an authentic dictionary or a full explanation. The meanings given are exactly what the translator has given in the text except for one or two cases here and there.

اعوذ باللّٰہ من الشیطان الرجیم:	*(a'udhu billahi minash shaytanir rajim)* I seek refuge in *Allah* from the accursed devil)
انا للّٰہ و انا الیہ راجعون:	*(inna lillahi wa inna ilahi raji'un)* see *istarja'*
(رحمہ اللّٰہ):	May *Allah* show mercy to him
(رحمۃ اللّٰہ علیہ):	May *Allah* have mercy on him
(رضی اللّٰہ عنہ):	May *Allah* be pleased with him
(صلی اللّٰہ علیہ وسلم):	May *Allah* bless him and give him peace
(علیہ السلام):	May peace be hon him
	ان الحمد و النعمۃ لک والملک لا شریک لک لبیک اللّٰھم لبیک ، لبیک لا شریک لک لبیک
a'raf,al:	the heights, the parapets
aafiyah:	safety, goof health and well-being
aal Imran:	(the) family of Imran
aalam:	all the world, universe
aalamin:	universe, all creation
adal:	justice, moderation
adhan:	the call to prayer, five times a day
ahbar:	learned Jewish scholars
ahl suffah:	see *ashabus suffah*
ahlul Kitab:	people of the Book
ahqab:	(pl. of hiqb, q.v)
ajda:	a devilish name one whose nose and ears are cut off.
akhirah:	hereafter
alam arwah:	world of the souls
alastu:	(الست) refers to the pledge *Allah* took from all the souls (Am I not your Lord) al-A'raf, 172
alim:	singular of *ulama*
amin (pronounced aamin):	(exclamation after a prayer meaning) do answer, O *Allah,* let it be so, accept our prayer.
amr bilma'ruf:	enjoining the reputable
an'am, al:	the quadrapeds
anbiyah:	Pl. of *nabi*
anfal, al:	the spoils of war. This word *anfal* is the plural of *nafl* (meaning, 'something extra') and anything more than the obligatory is *nafl.* A believer fights for *Allah's* sake, not for the booty. Hence, when he gets the booty, it is *anfal.*
anfal:	booty gained after battle
ansar:	supporters who welcomed the *muhajirs* from Makkah
aqd:	pledge
asabat:	tribes
asbat:	successors, grandsons children of (Prophet) Ishaq
ashab us suffah:	about 300 poor immigrants who lived on a raised platform in *Masjid Nabawi* devoted to acquiring knowledge and participating in *jihad*
ashab:	same as *sahabah*

ashabul faraid: 'people of inheritance,' those liable to receive their shares of inheritance

ashara mubashshara: ten people who were give glad tidings of Paradise

ashura: 10th of *Muharram*

asr: afternoon *(salah)*

aurah: that which the *Shari'ah* has called for being concealed, the intimate parts

awliya: (pl. of wali)

awsat mufassal: are the *surah* from *at-Tariq(86)* to *al-Bayyinah(98)*

ayah (Pl. ayat): sign, verse (of the Quran)

ayat ul Kursi: verse 255 of al-Baqarah

Aws: tribe of Madinah

Azazil: name of Iblis

ba'in (talaq): irrevocable divorce

badanah: large animal, (camels and cattles)

bahirah (بحيرة): a she-camel whose ear was slit by pagan Arabs with supertitions minds

bahirah: the she camel whose ear was cut off when she delivered five foals, the fifth being a male, so that she may not be slaughtered or mounted but allowed to roam about freely. But, *Qatadah* said that the fifth should be a female to allow the distinction

baitul izzah: *Allah's* House on the first heaven, House of honour

baqarah, al: the cow

bara'ah: exoneration

barakah: abundant good, blessing

basmalah: بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم *(Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim)* In the name of *Allah* the Beneficent, the Most Merciful)

bayt ul-Ma'mur: a place beneath *Allah's* throne where angels perform *tawaf*

bid: 13th, 14th, 15th of each lunar month when it is rewarding to fast

budn: pl. of badanah

buraq: an animal larger than a donkey and smaller than a horse travelling at speed of lightning. The Prophet ﷺ rode it to the heavens

buruj: stars; (twelve signs of the zodiac)

Bakht Nasr: Nebuchadnezar

Bakkah: another name for Makkah

Bani (or Banu) Isra'il: children of Isra'il

Bid'ah: innovation in religion

dajjal: antichrist

darul harb: enemy territory

dawn: penalty

dhabih: the one offered as sacrifice, Isma'il عليه السلام

dhakirin: those who engage in *dhikr*

dhamil arham: maternal relatives, blood relatives

dhamil qurba: relatives

dhann: assumption, dreams of other people

dhimmi: non-Muslim living in Islamic state under protection

dhul Khalsa: an idol regarded as the Ka'bah of Yemen, pulled down by Jarir bin Abdullah Bajali رضي الله عنه

din: religion

diyah:	blood money
diyah:	bloodhit, blood money
du'a:	prayer, supplication, call
dubur:	west/wind
durud:	invocating blessing on the Prophet
eela:	oath not to approach one's wife for an unspecified time
eid (eed):	festival
eid ul adha:	festival on 10th Dhul Hajjah when a sacrifice is made marking that of Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ
eid ul fitr:	festival marking end of Ramadan when *salah* is offered and before that *sadaqah al-fitr* is paid to the poor.
fa'i:	war booty gained without fighting
fajr:	dawn *(salah)*
fard:	absolutely obligatory, undeniable
fasiq (pl. fasiqun):	disobedient, transgressor, rebellious
fasiq:	open sinner
fatil:	wick a small skin in the cleft of a date stone anything very insignificant.
fatir:	creator, originator
fatrah:	period during which no Prophet or Messenger was sent
fatwa:	ruling on a religious issue
fatwa:	rulings on religions matters given by jurists
fayyi:	booty received by Muslims from disbelievers after a truce, without any fighting
fidyah:	expiation, atonement
fitrah:	nature, moral constitution
furqan:	discerner, that which differentiates
furqan:	discriminator, what distinguishes
fusuq:	sin
Fatihah:	opening
Fir'awn:	Pharaoh
ghamus:	false assertion of having done something in the past.
ghanima:	booty gained after battle
ghislin:	filth from the wounds of inmates of Hell
ghulu:	excesses, exaggeration (in religion)
haddul qadhaf:	punishment for defaming someones accusing him/her of adultery
hadith (pl. ahadith):	Prophet's ﷺ tradition
hady:	animal of sacrifice brought by pilgrim
haidh:	menstruation
hajj akbar:	*Hajj* itself
hajj al badl:	hajj performed on behalf of another
hajj asghar:	the *umrah*
hajr aswad:	The Black Stone
halal:	lawful, permitted
halal:	lawful, permitted
hama/ham/hami:	a she camel dedicated to idols by pagan Arabs
haram:	unlawful, forbidden, sacred
haram:	unlawful, forbidden, sacred
hasur:	chaste, abstaining from women, celibate

hawariyyin:	disciples of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام
hidayah:	guidance
hijab:	covering, veil
hijrah:	migration, migration to Madinah
hiqb:	an extreamly long period of time; eighty years each day of which is like a thousand years of this world
hubal:	an idol of the Makkans whose slogan Abu Sufyan raised at the *Uhud*
hudhud:	hoopoe
hullf (حلف):	agreement to assist one another in some matters
hur ayn:	large eyed maidens of Paradise
hur:	maidens of Paradise, (beautiful and fair)
Hajj:	annual pilgrimage which is obligatory on those who can perform it once in lifetime, involving visit to *Makkah, Mina, Arafat* and *Muzdalifah* (and *Madinah*).
Ham:	The stud camel whose 'grandson' impregnated a female, so it gained freedom. Or the stud camel who impregnated female camels ten times. It was set free
Harut/Marut:	two angels sent to try men
i'tikaf:	seclusion for worship - men do it in the mosque while women observe it at home
iblis:	a name of the devil
ibnus sabil:	traveller
iddah:	waiting period for a woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry.
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry
ifrad:	assuming *ihram* for only *hajj*
ihram:	every pilgrim must assume the *ihram* which makes certain lawful things unlawful to him and calls upon him to don particular dress.
ihsan:	be kind, do in a beautiful way
ihsar:	prevented from making pilgrimage
ijma:	congensus of opinion
ila(ella):	an oath by a husband that he will not have sexual intercourse with his wives
ilham:	inspiration in the heart
illiyyin:	a place, above seven heaveans where souls of believers reside
ilm:	knowledge
iman:	faith, belief
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will. This phrase is added everytime one speaks of doing something in future
ira'ahit tariq:	guidance by pointing out the path
irtidad:	apostacy
isal ilal matlub:	delivering to the exact destination
isal thawab:	consigning reward to another person of one's pious deeds
isha:	night *(salah)*
islah:	reformation, correction
isra:	night journey

istabraq:	fine silk
istarja:	to say انا للـه و انا اليه راجعون (to *Allah* we belong and to Him is our return) when faced with difficulty or on loss of a dear one.
istidraj:	respite given *Allah* before He seizes finally when the sinner commits sin boldly, step by step, bringing the infidel to hell by degrees
istighfar:	to seek forgiveness of *Allah*
istikhara:	a prayer to get *Allah's* guidance on some issue of concern
Isra'il (Prophet):	Yaqub عليه السلام
jahannum:	Hell
jamarah (jamarat):	three pillars marking the site where the devil tries to tempt Ismail عليه السلام
jamarah kubra:	the last *jamarah*
jamarah ula:	the first *jamarah*
jamarah wusta:	the middle *jamarah*
janazah salah:	funeral prayer
janazah:	funeral
jazakAllah:	may *Allah* reward you, may *Allah* give you recompense
jibt:	idols, name of an idol
jihad:	to fight in Allah's cause
Jannah:	Paradise
Jizya:	tax imposed by Islam an non-Muslims offering them protection
kaffarah:	expiation
kashf:	a form of Divine inspiration
khums:	one-fifth (of booty)
kufr amali:	disbelief in deeds
Ka'bah:	cube, the building in the centre of the sacred mosque in Makkah around which pilgrims circumambulate, and which worshippers face in their *salah.*
Kaffarah:	expiation
Kafir:	disbeliever, infidel
Kalalah:	a dead person who leaves neither father nor son but a brother or a sister
Karamah:	a wonder
Kawthar:	the Prophet's pond in the hereafter at which he stand and only the truly pious will be allowed to drink so that they will never feel thirsty
Khalil:	friend
Kharaj:	a tribute on land
Khazraj:	tribe of Madinah
Khula:	divorce given by a husband on his wife's initiative
Khulafa (s. Khalifah):	Caliphs
Khulafa Rashidun:	righteous caliphs
Khutbah:	sermon
Kiraman Katibin:	angels who record a person's deeds/words
Kitabah:	a slave's agreement to buy his own freedom from his master through regular payments
Kuffar:	(pl. of *Kafir*)
Kufr:	disbelief, to conceal (truth)

Kun (كُن): 'Be,' when *Allah* intends anything, He says *Kun* and it is.

la'n: curse

laat: a generous man Amir bin Zarb who fed travellers and was a judge. When he died Amr bin Luhay, made an idol of him. It was pulled down by Abu Sufya bin Harband ﷺ Mughira bin Shibah ﷺ

labayk: the pilgrim recites after assuming the *ihram*

laghw: futile, oath, meaningless, vain

laylatul qadar: the night of power which is the night in *Ramadan* when the Qur'an was revealed

lia'n: a couple who invoke *Allah's* curese on each other when the husband accuses his wife of immorality and she denies

lowhul mahfuz: preserved tablet

Laylatul jinn: the night when the *jinn* listened to the Qur'an and the Prophet's ﷺ sermon

ma'idah, al: the tablespread

mabrur: sinless

mahr mithal: dower (customary or) in force in the family

mahr: dower

mahram: a near relative with whom it is unlawful to marry, one with whom it is always unlawful to marry

makruh tahrimi: disapproved almost to the point of unlawfulness

makruh tahzihi: disliked in order to purify, withdraw out of *taqwa*, abstain

makruh: disliked, reprehensible, not approved

manasik: rites of *hajj*

maqamul Mahmud: praisworthy station

mashwarah: consultation

masjid: mosque

mathani: the *surahs* from *surah Yunus* to *al-Hujrat*

mawdihatul hasanah: beautiful exhortations

mawlal mawalat: two people made a contract to help pay one another's penalty, if any, and to inherit from one another, each of these was so called

maytah: carrion, animals that die a natural death

mi'raj: ascension to the heavens

mihrab: sanctuary, place of worship, a riche in the mosque (for the imam), a place of battle (like against the devil)

mirain: *Surahs* that contain a little more than a hundred verses

miswak: a fine tuig for brushing teeth

mu'allaq: an attached vow

mu'anaqa: to embrace

mu'awwadhatayn: last two surahs of the Qur'an al-Falaq and an-Nas

muadhdhin: one who calls the *adhan*

mubahalah: two or more opposing parties invoke curse on the wrongdoer.

mufassal: the *surahs* from *Qaf(50)* to the end of the Quran are socalled

mufrid: who performs *ifrad hajj*

mufti: jurisprudent, scholar who is eligiable to give religions rulings *(fatwa)*

muhaddith (pl. muhaddithin): scholar of *hadith*

muhajir (muhajirun/muhajrin): emigrants

muharramat abadiyah: women whom a man can never marry

muharramat musaharah: women whom a man cannot marry because of marriage ties

muharramat nasabiyah: women whom a man cannot marry because of close relationship

muharramat rada'iyyah: women whom a man cannot marry because of suckling

muhkamat: clear, comprehensive verses of the Qur'an

muhsin: a Muslim adult, free, married person who has consumated his or her marriage. If any of them commits, adultery then he or she must be stoned to death

muhsir: one who is prevented

mujahadah: stuggle between two; thus a persons struggle against his carnal self to better his hereafter

mujahid: warrior

mulhid: athiest, disbeliever

munadi: one who calls out loudly, proclaimer, herald

munafiq: hypocrite

munafiqun: pl. of *munafiq*

munajat: quiet supplication to *Allah*

muqantarah: huge proportions

muqatta'at, huruf: abbreviated letters like (الم *alif laam meem*) in the first verse of 29 *surah*

muqtadi: one who follows the *iman* in *salah*

murtad: apostate

murtahin: receiver

musafaha: to shake hands

musafir: traveller

mustahab: desirable, recommended, that which was observed by the Prophet ﷺ sometimes and omitted sometimes.

mut'ah: temporary marriage

mutashabihat: allegorical verses of the Qur'an whose meaning is known to *Allah* alone, example: 'The Most Merciful is firm on the throne' (surah TaHa, 5)

mutashabihat: allegorical, figurative, co-similar, difficult to fathom.

mutlaq: a genaral vow

muttaqin (pl. of muttaqi): those who fear *Allah*, who observe *taqwa*

muttaqin: abstinent, pious those who fear *Allah*

muwahhid: a monotheist

Ma'ruf: righteousness reputable

Maghrib: sunset (*salah* after)

Manat: Banu Hudhayl and Banu Khuza'ah made this idol and made offering to it as a means of nearness to *Allah*

Manna: *Allah*'s blessing sent to *Banu Isra'il* like white sugar, with *salwa*

Maqam Ibrahim: Station of Ibrahim, عليه السلام the rock on which he stood while building the *Ka'ba*

Maqam ul Mahmud: the praisworthy station

Maryam: worshipper (against verse 37 Aal Imran), mother of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام

Mash'arul Haram:	where rites of *hajj* are performed at *Muzdalifah*
Mu'min (Pl. mu'minun):	believer
Mubahalah:	invoking curse on the apposing party who is said to be the wrong-doer, mutual imprecation
Mukatab:	slave who enters into a Kitabah
Mukatabah:	same as Kitabah
Mun'aqida:	promise to do or not do something in the future
Munkar:	rejected, disreputable
Mushrik (Pl. mushrikun):	polytheist
Mutawatir (ah):	continuously handed down
Muttatu:	who perfroms *tamattu hajj*
naat:	poem in prise of the Prophet ﷺ
nabi:	Prophet
nabi:	a Prophet with no new *Shari'ah* or Book
nabuwah:	Prophethood
nafkh:	breath (of Jibril)
nafl:	optional
nafs:	base self
nahi an almunkar:	forbid the disreputable
najashi:	negus, the king of Abyssinia/Ethiopia
najwa:	secret meeting
naml:	ants
nasara:	christians
nasran:	same as *nasara*
nasrani:	singular of *nasara/nasran*
nazghun:	temptation
nifaq:	hypocrisy
night of qadr:	see *laylatul qadr*
nisa, an:	the women
nisab:	the amount of gold, silver, currency, wealth or property that attracts payment of *zakah*
nisab:	the minimum property or wealth that attracts payment of *zakah*
noqir:	tiny spot on a date pit; something very insignificant.
nur:	light
Nahl-an:	the bee
Nijr-Al:	capital city of the *Thamud*
Paraclete:	one who people praise exceedingly (which is Muhammad in Arabic)
qada:	lapse, missing a fard and making up later.
qarin:	who performs *qiran hajj*
qasas:	story
qati:	clear commands in dreams
qawa'id:	old women who remain indvors and past age of marriage
qibla:	the direction (of the *Ka'ba*) which worshippers face in their *salah*
qiran:	assuming *ihram* for both *umrah* and *hajj*, performing the *umrah* but not giving up the ihram, and after performing hajj, when due, shaving head and discarding the *ihram*
qisar mufassal:	the *surah* from *az-Zilzal(99)* to *an-Nas(114)* are so called

qisas"	retaliation
qitmir:	pellice, date stone, anything on no value
qunut:	stand in humility
Qasr (salah):	shortened *salah*
Qintar:	large wealth, 42,000 ooqiya or 4,80,000 dirhams
Qiyamah:	Day of Resurrection
ra'd:	thunder
rabb (Pl. arbab):	Lord
rabbaniyun:	those of *Allah,* who are attached to *Allah*
rabitu:	attach to a task dedicatedly, preparing beast for battle, guarding borders of Islamic state
rahn:	pledge
raj'i (talaq):	revocable divorce
rajam:	stoning married adulterer to death
rami:	pelting stones at the *jamarat*
rasul:	Messenger
rasul:	messenger who is a Prophet with a new *Shari'ah* and a new Book
rawafid:	the *shias*
rayhan:	nourishment, fragrant plants, flowers sustenance
risalat:	messengership, office of a Messenger
ruh:	spirit, mercy (commentary on verse 170/171 surah Nisa), inspiration
ruku':	bowing posture in the *salah*
Rahim, ar:	The most merciful, (attribute of *Allah*)
Rahman ar:	The Beneficent, The Merciful (attribute of *Allah*)
Ruhul Qudus:	appelation of Jibril عليه السلام
saba:	wind that blows from east to west
sabian:	(1) worshippers of angels (2) fire-worshippers who were also Jews and Christians (3) had no religion but believed in *Allah*
sabr:	patience
sadaqah:	charity
sadaqatul fitr:	charity given after end of the month of fasting (Ramadan)
sadhu:	Hindu ascetic
saff:	row
sajdah:	prostration
salam:	greeting
salatul duha:	optional *salah* after sunrise
salatul fath:	optional *salah* on gaining victory
salatul khawf:	*salah* performed while in fear
salatul wusta:	the *salah* between others, midmost *salah*
salihin:	righteous
salihun (pl. of salih):	righteous
sayyidut-tabi'in:	a title of Uwais Qarni given to him by the Prophet ﷺ for, though he embraced Islam in his times, he could not meet him because he tended to his ailing mother
shafa 'atul uzma:	the great intercession for everyone
shafi:	cure
shafiyah:	cure
shahid:	martyr, witness
shirk:	polytheism

shuhada:	Pl. of *shahid*
shukr:	gratitude
sidratul muntaha:	a lotus or jujube tree over the seventh heaven near Paradise at the limit beyond which is nothing
sijjin:	a place beneath seven earths where souls of disbelievers are kept
siqayatul hajj:	providing water to the pilgrims
sirat:	a very narrow, slippery bridge over hell which the believers will cross over swifty but the infidesls will fall into hell
siratul mustaqim:	the right path
siwak:	see *miswak*
sunnah:	practice of the Prophet ﷺ
sa'ibah (سایبة):	a slave or an animal set free for the sake of an idol
sa'iqah:	thunderclap, lightning bolt
sab'u tiwal:	the lengthy *surahs* in the begining after *al-Fatihah* - from *al-Baqarah* to *at-Taubah* or *Bara'a*
Sa'i (سعی):	the seven rounds between *Safa* and *Marwah,* the two hillocks, by the pilgrims.
Sa'ibah:	If a camel bore ten foals she qualified for exemption from work and from being milked. Her hair was cut off to mark her. But some said that it was a camel dedicated to an idol and the custodian slaughtered her and gave its meat away
Sabt:	Sabbath
Sadanatul bayt:	to unlock and lock the door of the *Ka'bah*
Saffat, as:	The rangers, the angels
Sahabah:	companions of the Prophet ﷺ (pl. of *sahabi*)
Sahabi:	s. of *sahabah*
Sahifah:	scriptures in a smaller form
Salah:	regular prayer, form of worship made up of different postures and recitals, physical worship, also invoking blessing on the Prophet ﷺ
Salwa:	*Allah's* blessing to *Banu Isra'il,* quails
Sha'air (شعار) (pl of شاعرة sha'irah):	Signs, to kens
Shari'ah:	Islamic law as prescribed by the *Qur'an* and the *hadith,* the way the religion is observed.
Shaybi:	custodian of the keys of the *Ka'bah*
Shaytan:	Satan, the devil
Shuh:	riggardliness
Siddiqun (Siddiqin):	truthful
Sirat ul mustaqim:	straight path
Sufiyah:	*sufis,* mystics
Sundus:	fine silk
Surah (Pl. Suwar):	Chapter (of the Quran)
Taybah:	another name of Madinah
ta'awwudh:	seeking refuge in *Allah* in the words
tabi'un/tabi'in (s. tabi'i):	successors of the *sahabah,* ﷺ epigones
tafaqqu:	attain deep understanding of religion
tafsir birra'iy:	interpretation based on own opinion
tafsir:	commentary, explanation, interpretation
taghabun:	mutual loss and gain
tahajjud (salah):	*Salah* offered voluntarily in the dead of the night

	when others are asleep
tahiyyah:	greeting, prayer, *salam*
tahlil (تحليل):	to make lawful
tahlil (تهليل):	to say *La ilaha illAllah*
tahmid:	praise of *Allah*
tajwid:	science of recital of the *Qur'an* with correct articulation and punctuation.
takbir (pl. takbirat):	to say *Allahu Akbar*
talaq:	divoce given by a husband to his wife on his own
talaq:	divorce
talbiyah:	reciting *labayk* during pilgrimage
tamattu:	assuming *ihram* for *umrah* during months of *hajj* and having performed it, assuming *ihram* for *hajj* on the 8th of Dhul Hajjah
tanfil:	proclamation that warriors may retain to themselves whatever booty they acquire, the booty being called *nafl*.
taqdir:	fate, Divine decree
taqiyya:	expression of what one really disagrees with, lying in religion - a shi'a belief
taqwa:	righteousness, a God-fearing attitude
tariqah:	a path, religious life as seen by the *sufis*
tasawwuf:	sufism mysticism, intense love of *Allah* and the Prophet ﷺ, and obedience to them
tasbih:	to glorify *Allah*
tashahhud:	at-tahiyyat recited in the sitting posture in salah and forms the words recited during the mi'raj
tasmiyyah:	to recite the basmalah
taubah:	repentance
taubah:	repentance
taught:	rebellious conduct, false god, idol
tawaf:	circum ambulation of th. *Ka'ba*
tawaffa:	to raise souls, to lift something completely, to put something to sleep, to grant death to someone
tawakkul:	trust in *Allah*
tawhid:	oneness of *Allah*, monotheism
tayammum:	dry ablution when water is unavailable or use of it is harmful
tiwal mufassal:	are the *surah* from *Qaf(50)* to *al-Buruj(85)*
tuhr:	purity apposite of menstruation
Ulama:	Scholars (of religion)
Umrah:	Optional pilgrimage of a lesser nature.
umm:	Mother, chief
ummah (Pl. umam):	Community, followers/people of a Prophet.
ummul qura (mother of all villages):	a name of Makkah
uququl walidain:	disobedience to parents and causing them grief and hardship
ushr:	a tenth, payable on produce
uzza:	a female devil who visited three accacia trees in Batn Nakhla, an idol carved by Zalim bin As'ad, destroyed by Khalid bin Walid رضي الله عنه
wahy:	to cost into the heart, to reveal, to inspire
wajib:	obligatory to a degree lesser than *fard*

wali:	friend of *Allah,* man of *Allah*
wali:	friend, helper
wasata:	best, just, reliable
wasilah (وصيلة):	a female animal (camel or ewe) honoured to the idols by observing some superstition
wasilah:	It was a goat that bore seven kids. Only males could use her and upon her death, both males and females ate from her carcos
wassiyah:	bequest
wazifah:	rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wird:	rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wudu:	ablution to gain purity (before offering *salah* for instance)
Yahud:	name of Jews because they repented from calf worship
Yathrib:	original name of Madinah
yasin:	O men! A name of the Prophet ﷺ
yastambituna:	'People with insight' but literally 'to extract water from the depths of the earth,' hence, those who can unearth the truth
yamin:	oath
yaqin:	conviction
Zamzam:	a well in *Makkah* of incessant water of *zamzam,* discovered by Abdul Muttalib and originally scraped by an angel for Prophet Isma'il عليه السلام
Zaqqum:	a bitter tree in hell
Zuhr:	midday *(salah)*
Zulumat (pl.):	darkness, falsehood
zakah:	charity prescribed at a certain rate on those holding a certain amount of assets called *nisab,* worship of financial form
zihar:	telling one's wife, "You are to me like my Mother's back

INDEXES

There are three different sets of index, an index of names appearing in the commentary, an index of subjects in the commentary, and, an index of books to which the commentary refers but the major books of hadith like Bukhari, Muslim, etc. are not mentioned. The numbers against each entry refer to the pages and an 'f' following a number implies that the entry is repeated on that page or up to five following pages.

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Anwar ul-Bayan

Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri رحمة الله عليه is a renowned, recognised religious authority. He was a prolific writer and there are a number of books to his credit covering a wide range of religious subjects. His commentary on the Qur'an, Anwarul ul-Bayan, speaks highly of his deep knowledge and learning. He has written an exhaustive commentary on each surah of the Qur'an – nay on every *ruku'* or section and quoted earlier authorities. His work is interspersed with the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sayings and with interpretations of the learned *sahabah* رضي الله عنهم اجمعين like Sayyidina Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه and Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه and the notable *tabi'in* like Abdullah Ibn Mubarak رحمة الله عليه, Hasan Busri رحمة الله عليه, etc.

He has explained the Qur'an by the Qur'an itself and by the ahadith and then by the opinion of recognised exegates. He has not hesitated in recounting historical events and related episodes and has drawn conclusions and rulings therefrom.

In supervision of Mufti Afzal Hussain Ilyas a team of translators has rendered the Urdu commentary into lucid and easy-to-understand English. He has not failed to explain Arabic terminology with its corresponding English word in paranthesis. He has also given apt headings and sub-headings of chapters and paragraphs. This commentary is a valuable addition to Islamic literature.

Darul-Ishaat has published this commentary with the permission of Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi رحمة الله عليه and Mawlana Ilyas. A comprehensive glossary in the five volumes and indices of subjects and names at the end of each volume are included.

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